DOCTRINAL DISCOURSES

BY
REV. A. M. SKELLY, O. P.

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DOCTRINAL DISCOURSES

For the Sundays and the Chief Festivals of the Year

IN FIVE VOLUMES

By

REV. A. M. SKELLY, O. P.

SECOND VOLUME

From the First Sunday in Lent to the Second Sunday after Easter, Inclusive

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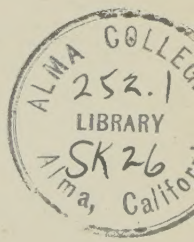

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To my dear nephews and nieces,
through whose kind and generous help
I have been enabled to publish
these volumes,
this work is affectionately
dedicated.

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DOCTRINAL DISCOURSES

For the Sundays and the Chief Festivals of the Year

INTRODUCTORY CONFERENCE: THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

I.

Its Nature.

"O Lord, make me know my end," etc.—Ps. xxxviii, 5.

1. The first duty of one who sets out on a career or life profession is to strive to gain a thorough grasp of the purposes of that career and the principles of that profession.

We must never forget that the formal purpose for which God sent us into the world was to lead a Christian life, and to save our souls.

2. What the Christian life is, and why called supernatural and Divine.

3. Short prefatory explanation to show how the Christian life is, through means of sanctifying grace and the infused habits, a participation and an imitation of the life Divine.

4. In order that it be so, our nature and the powers of our soul must be lifted to the supernatural and Divine order. They are so lifted, the one by sanctifying grace, the others by the infused habits. What sanctifying grace is, and how by it we put on a new and Divine existence and become children of God.

What the infused habits are, by means of which we are enabled to perform all our supernatural actions. When those supernatural actions are called BEATITUDES, *and when,* THE FRUITS OF THE HOLY GHOST. *The Christian life is, finally, a participation and an imitation of the life Divine, inasmuch as the Holy Ghost takes up His dwelling place in us, and is truly to us, "Donum Dei altissimi," "Gift of the most High God;" nay, through love, the whole Trinity comes to dwell in us as is intimated to us in our Lord's words: "If anyone will love Me," etc.*

5. Habits, even supernatural ones, require a motor to produce their acts. The Holy Ghost Himself impresses motion on all those riches of sanctifying grace and of charity by actual grace. Actual grace it is, then, which puts in action the virtues and the gifts. The Divine Motor finishes His work even to this, that, after having conducted us from light to light, and from virtue to virtue, He renders us participators of the supernatural life finished and consummated by the "Light of Glory." Then we arrive at Vision and at the eternal possession of the Divine Essence.

II.

Jesus Christ, the Foundation of It.

1. Jesus Christ is shown to be the foundation of the Christian life, and this, because there was none other than He found capable of bridging the gulf that separated guilty man from God, and of enabling us to re-enter on the true life of our souls, which is God. The prerogatives of Adam are described, prerogatives which were lost in the FALL. *What we lost through the sin of our first father, we recover in Jesus Christ, and with added advantages.*

2. Three unities in Our Lord are described, and their connection and resemblance declared.

3. It is shown in what consists this connection and resemblance, and how we are to understand this mystic unity of Christ and His living members. Why the source of this mystic unity of Christ with us is called "the grace of the Head," and why it is just to see in Christian souls so much of Jesus Christ by participation. It is declared how by reason of this mystic union which exists between us and Jesus Christ by grace His supernatural and Divine life is our life. His merits begin to belong to us, and we enter into communication of His rights to the celestial inheritance.

III.

The Holy Ghost, Its Sovereign Motor.

1. But if Christ is the source of the supernatural order in us, the Holy Ghost is its Sovereign Motor. It is He Who is the love by excellence of the Father and of the Son to Whom are attributed the works of love such as are the application to us of the fruits of the Redemption. In this application there are two great acts, namely, our justification and our sanctification.

2. And, first of all, He infuses in us the life Divine, and effaces with our concurrence the stains and the filth of sin. With the grace of justification we receive not only sanctifying grace and all the infused virtues, but the Holy Trinity, whole and entire, dwell in us. We become the adopted children of God, brethren of Jesus Christ, and co-heirs of His glory. Meanwhile the Divine act of the Holy Ghost does not stop at our justification. It tends to develop and progress incessantly. He enlightens us. He strengthens us. He sanctifies us more and more. He leads us even till we arrive at the port of salvation. The sanctification of souls is thus a law of progress. At last in heaven by the Holy Ghost will be accomplished beatific love, consummation of love Divine and plentitude of repose of souls.

3. Summary.

I.

Its Nature.

1. When one sets out on a career or life profession his first duty is to strive to gain a thorough grasp of the purposes of that career and the principles of that profession, otherwise, he becomes befogged in his endeavors, and his efforts are blighted by failure. It was for this reason that the Psalmist prayed to have always before him a vivid realization of the end, not only of his elevation to the throne of Israel, but also of his creation; and hence his ardent prayer: "O Lord, make me know my end, and what is the number of my days, that I may know what is wanting to me."

You must never forget, my dear friends, that when you were sent into the world by God you were sent, not with the object of taking up a certain set of worldly duties, of fulfilling a certain position in life, of prosecuting what is understood in the world as a successful career, and of making a success in life.

The formal purpose for which God sent you into the world, and to the attainment of which it is your duty to

strive every hour, is to lead a sincere Christian life, and to save your soul.

2. To lead a Christian life, to save your soul—this leads me before going further, to explain what I mean by the Christian life.

"The Christian Life," says St. Thomas, "is the supernatural and Divine life of a soul renewed in Jesus Christ and fashioned by the Holy Ghost."

The Christian life is called supernatural and Divine, because through means of sanctifying grace and the infused habits it is a participation and an imitation of the life of God in Himself, and because it has God for principle, means, and end. God is the principle of it, for He is the Author of every perfect gift. He is the end of it, since we go to God as to our center, and the term of our felicity. God is also the means of it, in as much as He conducts us to this happy term by a suitable Divine act, which is our predestination in eternity, and our justification and sanctification in time.

3. I have said that the Christian life is through means of sanctifying grace and the infused habits, a participation and an imitation of the Life Divine. To show you this, a short prefatory explanation will not be without its utility.

God alone is for Himself His principle and end. Infinite Being, He finds His complete and ultimate perfection in His own essence.

We have God for our principle and end. Our complete and ultimate perfection consists in our union with the Principle Who gave us being, that is, God.

In the natural order this union is effected by natural knowledge and love; that is, by knowledge acquired

through the contemplation of God in His works, and by a love resultant from that knowledge, since in this state we are incapable of the direct knowledge of God. Such will be the condition of unbaptized infants in the next life.

In the supernatural order *absolute* as we understand it here, our end can be only *God Himself.* Hence, the perfection of our soul raised to the supernatural order will consist in the supernatural knowledge and love of God; that is, in the vision of the Divine Essence, and in the love which corresponds to it, and is the complement of it; in the immediate possession of God.

4. In order to arrive at this end our *nature* and the *powers* of our soul must participate in the supernatural and Divine order, as without this there would not be proportion between the nature, the end, and the means. But how shall our nature, and how shall the powers of our soul be raised to the supernatural? This is done by *sanctifying grace,* and by the *infused habits.* By sanctifying grace, I say. Now, sanctifying grace is a quality of the Divine order inherent in the substance of the soul of which it is the supernatural form. By sanctifying grace we put on a new and Divine existence, and we become children of God, and coheirs with Jesus Christ.

Together with sanctifying grace which adheres, as I have said, to the substance of the soul, we receive all the infused habits which perfect the powers of the soul, chiefly the mind and will. These are all the infused virtues, theological and moral, together with the *gifts* properly so called of the Holy Ghost—virtues and gifts by means of which are performed all our supernatural actions. If those supernatural acts are produced by perfect or heroic virtues, they are called "beatitudes." If

they are accompanied with a certain spiritual delectation, they are "the fruits of the Holy Ghost."

Being in possession of sanctifying grace and the infused habits, the Holy Ghost takes up His dwelling in us; and it is chiefly by reason of this indwelling of the Holy Ghost in us that He is called in the hymn, and with strict theological propriety, *"Donum Dei altissimi,"* "Gift of the Most High God," or, rather, the three Divine Persons dwell in us and unite Themselves to us; and it is to this indwelling and this union that our Lord refers when He says: "If anyone will love Me, My Father will love him, and We, that is, the whole Trinity, will come to him and take up our dwelling with him"—a signal favor which crowns the dignity of the Christian.

5. But for the supernatural habits there must be a motor. Here again is a manifestation of love. After having created in the soul the supernatural life of sanctifying grace, and after having perfected our powers by the infused and supernatural habits, the Holy Ghost impresses motion to all those riches of sanctifying grace and charity by actual grace. Actual grace then puts in action the virtues and the gifts, for there is no life without action.

The Divine Motor finishes His work even to this that after having conducted us from light to light, and from virtue to virtue, He renders us participators of the supernatural life finished and consummated by the *Light of Glory.* Then we arrive at *Vision* and at the eternal possession of the Divine Essence.

Such are briefly the marvels of Divine love in souls.

II.

Jesus Christ the Foundation of It.

1. It might be asked: What is the foundation of the supernatural life in souls? We answer: It is none other than our Lord, Jesus Christ. There is in fact no other foundation for the supernatural and Divine life, because there is no other means of bridging the gulf which separated guilty man from God. To attain this end there was need of a Man-God. Jesus Christ is come then in order that we might be able to enter on the possession of the true life of our souls, which is God. The first man was created in a state of justice and sanctity. His body obeyed his inferior powers. His inferior powers bowed with respect before his reason. His reason was submissive to God. The subordination was complete. Together with sanctifying grace Adam possessed a marvelous assemblage of gifts and virtues. This blessed state did not outlast the *trial*. We know, alas, by our experience the deplorable results of that trial.

Now, what we lost through the sin of our first father, we have recovered in Jesus Christ. The grace of justification through Jesus Christ does not, it is true, make us re-enter on all the prerogatives of the state of original innocence. Meantime, beyond the remission of our sins we find by this grace in Jesus Christ, our Lord, a principle of supernatural life of a superior efficiency, one moreover proportionate to our actual weakness. Jesus Christ, the Man-God, teaches us the supernatural life by His doctrine. He enforces it by His example. He merits it for us by the virtue of His Blood. He imparts it to us by sanctifying grace which He possesses

in its plenitude. He is then our Master, our Model, our Redeemer, and our Head.

2. We need not delay here to show how our Lord is for us the principle of the supernatural life by His example and doctrine. It will suffice to follow the traces of His merits and show forth in Him the foundation and the source of the supernatural life.

We can consider three unities in our Lord. As God, there is a unity of nature between the Word and the two other Divine Persons. As the Word Incarnate, there is an absolute unity of Person between the Divine nature and the Human nature by the grace of the hypostatic union. As Head of the Church, there is a mystic union between our Lord and His living members, in this sense that many persons make but *one sole mystic body* under one sole Head Who unites them and with Whom as integrating parts they concur to form mystically only one sole Person and one sole Jesus Christ. This mystic unity is not the unity of nature, nor the unity absolute and properly speaking of person; yet there are between these three unities a certain connection and resemblance. Just as the unity of Person in the Word Incarnate finds its exemplar in the unity of the Divine Essence, so the mystic unity of the members with their Head has its prototype as well as its efficient cause in the hypostatic union of the Word with human nature.

3. But in what consists this connection and resemblance, and how we are to understand this mystic unity, it is important to explain.

And first of all, the same grace that is in our Lord is also in us. Jesus Christ, the universal principle of all grace, possesses it in its plenitude. It is from this living and inexhaustible source that it is poured into all souls

which form part of the mystic body of the Church—in such sort that we can say that grace, quality of the Divine order—the supernatural *form* of our souls, is in its entirety in our Lord. "Grace, the principle of eternal life," says St. Paul, "is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. vi, 23.) "It is of the fulness of this principle that we all have drunk," says St. John (1, 16), for we form mystically only one Person with our Lord.

The source of this mystic unity is called in Church language "the grace of the Head," because, just as the head of the human body exercises its influence, and acts on all the members; so, our Lord acts on all those who belong to Him. "For God has given Him," says again St. Paul, "as Head of His Church." (Eph. 1, 22.) It is an incontestable truth that all the graces which the Saviour possesses are not solely in Him as in a particular Man, but they are in Him as in the Head of the Church to Whom all the faithful are united, in order that flowing from Him they may be poured on them to be in them a principle of life and of supernatural and Divine operations. If the same grace that is in our Lord is also in us, is it not just to say that, mystically, there is only one sole Person, one sole Jesus Christ, in the whole body of the Church, the parts of which are joined and united together with so just a proportion? (Eph. iv, 15.) Is it not just to see in Christian souls so much of Jesus Christ by participation? St. Paul did not fear to say: "I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me," as if he wished to give us to understand that his life and actions belong to Jesus Christ, Who, in the order of grace, is the mystic Person Who animates the body of His Church; is it not also in this sense that Christ is born, and grows in us, even till, finally, He receives in us His

perfection? (Gal. iv, 19.) And can we understand any other thing when we hear the Apostle say that he "fills up in himself what was wanting to the sufferings of Christ?" (Col. 1, 24.)

Granted that the life of Christ, the Man-God, considered in the rigor of terms, be not our natural life; yet, by reason of this mystic unity which exists between us and Him by grace, His supernatural and Divine life is our life. His merits begin to belong to us and we enter into communication of His rights to the celestial inheritance. What a mystery! In Jesus, and by Him, we are redeemed from sin; in Him, and by Him, we become children of God; in Him and by Him, the whole Trinity dwell in us; in Him and by Him, we become citizens of heaven! Yes! Jesus is the source living, universal, inexhaustible, of the supernatural and Divine order, because in Him and by Him God has given us His grace, which is a most excellent participation of the Divine nature.

III.

The Holy Ghost: Its Sovereign Motor.

1. But if Christ is the source of the supernatural order in us, the Holy Ghost is its Sovereign Motor. Jesus Christ is the Head and Spouse of the Church; the Holy Ghost is the heart of it. For it is the Holy Ghost Who impresses movement to the supernatural life of which our Lord is the foundation and the source. Our Lord has redeemed us. It is by the Holy Ghost that we are justified and sanctified. What good would the Redemption be to us if the fruits of salvation which *it* has merited for us were not applied to us? Now, this application is particularly attributed to the Holy Ghost

to Whom belongs, by *appropriation,* justification and the sanctification of souls.

The application of the fruits of salvation is attributed, I say, to the Holy Ghost, to Whom belongs, by appropriation, our justification and sanctification. Without doubt, the three Divine Persons operate conjointly in our justification and sanctification. Nevertheless, in Church language founded on Holy Scripture, we attribute power and the Creation to the Father, because He is the first Person of the Blessed Trinity whence the others proceed; wisdom and all that depends on it are attributed to the Son, because He is the Word, the Wisdom of God. Goodness and all the effects of the love of God, as justification and sanctification, are on a just title attributed to the Holy Ghost Who is love.

2. The application of the fruits of salvation is attributed to the Holy Ghost. In this application of the merits of our Lord, Jesus Christ, there are two great acts, namely, justification and sanctification.

And, first of all, the Holy Ghost, Sovereign Motor of our souls, prevents us by His grace. He incites; He calls; He inspires; then He operates justification. He infuses in us the life Divine, and effaces with our concurrence the pains and the guilt of sin. In fact, contrition produced in us by the Holy Ghost withdraws us from evil and turns us towards God, our End. It belongs to the Holy Ghost, Who created all things by love, to create us anew in the supernatural order. For it is by Him that God does all things. God by loving His own goodness is the universal cause of all things. "Lord," says the Wise Man, "Thou lovest all things that are, and Thou hatest none of Thy Works." (Sap.

vi, 25.) "Divine love," says St. Denis the Areopagite, "has not allowed God to remain unfruitful." It was necessary, then, that the souls of men destroyed by sin in the supernatural point of view, be created anew by the Holy Ghost. "Send forth Thy Spirit," says again the Psalmist, "and they shall be created, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth." That the Holy Ghost has this virtue, this mission to fulfil, what wonder that all sins are removed through love? "Charity covereth a multitude of sins."

With the grace of justification we receive not only sanctifying grace and all the infused habits, but the Holy Trinity, whole and entire, begin to dwell in us. The Holy Ghost regenerates us spiritually. We become the adopted children of God, brethren of Jesus Christ, and co-heirs of His glory. Eternal life is due to us only inasmuch as we become children of God.

Now, we become children of God in becoming like to our Lord; but we become like to our Lord in living according to His Spirit, Who is the Holy Ghost. "You have not received a spirit of servitude, but you have received the spirit of adoption by which we all cry, 'My Father,' 'My Father.'" (Rom. viii, 15.) This is an incontestable truth. For the Spirit of God Himself affirms that we are the children of God. "Because you are His children," says St. Paul again, "God has sent into your hearts the Spirit of His Son, Who makes you cry: 'My Father,' 'My Father.'" (Gal. iv, 6.) What a supreme and truly Divine dignity! What a treasure, that of justification!

3. Meanwhile, the Divine action of the Holy Ghost does not stop here. After having justified us, He sanctifies us. The movement given by justification

tends to develop and to progress unceasingly. The Holy Ghost does not content Himself with offering us His succor in order to enter on the way of justice and sanctity. He enlightens us, He strengthens us, He sanctifies us more and more. He leads us even till we arrive at the term and the port of salvation.

First, the Holy Ghost enlightens our intellect. It is by Him that we know all things that we know. "The Spirit, the Paraclete Whom the Father will send you in My Name will teach you all things, and will recall to you all that I have told you." (John xiv, 26.) "His unction will instruct you in all that you ought to know." (John ii, 27.)

Second, the Holy Ghost strengthens us; He aids us and in some sort constrains us to observe the Commandments. For it is the proper of love to unite wills, and to carry to the most generous sacrifice. "If anyone love Me he will keep My Commandments." (John xiv, 23.) It is the Holy Ghost Who makes us love God; so, too, it is He Who aids us to observe His Commandments. "I will give you a new heart," says Ezekiel, "and I will put a new spirit within you. I will take away the stony heart that beats in your breast, and I will give you a true heart of flesh animated with My Spirit. I will make you walk in the way of my precepts, keep and fulfil My laws." (Ez. xxxvi, 26.)

Finally, the Holy Ghost directs us in the generous fulfilment of the Divine will in such a way as that all in us corresponds to His Divine movements. He becomes our sole Master and Guide.

The sanctification of souls is a law of progress. The Holy Ghost, Divine Motor of the supernatural life, stops in the way of perfection only at the last term,

that is, at eternal life, by the grace of final perseverance which conducts to it.

At last, in heaven, by the Holy Ghost will be accomplished beatific love, consummation of love Divine and plenitude of repose of souls. It is then by the Holy Ghost that we are justified and sanctified.

4. We had lost in Adam with Divine grace all right to the celestial inheritance. We were soiled with all sorts of crimes. The love of God has repaired all. We have re-entered on the possession of grace with a superabundance which would be astonishing if love were not the principle of it. But how is this mystery operated? *In the name of Jesus Christ, by the merits of Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God, and by the Holy Spirit, Who makes the application of it in our heart.*

FIRST PART

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT.

FIRST SERMON: TEMPTATIONS.

"Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterwards He was hungry."—Matt. iv, 1-11.

I.

1. Introduction. Among the many wonderful things that are told of our blessed Lord in the Gospel, the most remarkable is this which is related in the fourth chapter of St. Matthew, where it is said that He allowed Himself to be tempted by the devil!—this He did in order that He might teach us how we are to overcome temptations.

2. Our Lord's great charity and condescension in doing so; for there is no man without temptation; it enters the holiest places, comes upon us in the most consecrated moments, invades the holiest states. It tries us especially and with greatest vehemence when we become converted and when we propose to ourselves to strive for perfection; this, the result of the enmity of the devil.

3. Application of the preceding statement to various states and persons. Those temptations from the devil; "our wrestling is with principalities and powers"; from the world; "love not the world; for all that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life"; and from the flesh; for, though we have been regenerated in Baptism, there still dwells in us the "fomes peccati." "The stimulus of sin," which induces "a law in our members contradicting the law of our mind."

II.

1. Though we may expect temptations and strong ones at every stage of our life, we are not to be discouraged; for "God will make issue with the temptation so that it may not overcome us."

2. Nay, He has given us in temptation the opportunity of gaining the most glorious victories over our spiritual enemies.

3. Still further, He has given us in temptation the opportu-

nity of gaining untold merits. Story related from the lives of the Fathers of the Desert.

4. Conclusion. Temptation not an unmixed evil, but through the providence of God it has been made to serve as the instrument of our highest good.

I.

All Classes Subject to Them.

1. The Gospels tell us of many wonderful things performed by our Lord during the course of His life. They tell us, for instance, of how He changed water into wine at the marriage feast of Cana in Galilee—of how He walked on the waters—of how He stilled the tempest—of how He was transfigured on Mount Tabor—of how He raised the dead to life, and performed other wonderful miracles. These are very striking acts indeed, and they go to prove His absolute power over nature and that He was Divine. But there is one thing told of our blessed Lord which, to me at least, appears more remarkable than any of these; and it is that which is narrated in this, the fourth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, where the Saviour is led into the desert "to be tempted by the devil". This, I say, is the most remarkable thing told of our blessed Lord in the Gospels.

That He should change water into wine is not wonderful, since He was gifted with Divine power. That He should walk upon the waters, or still the angry elements, is not wonderful, since He is the Master of the elements. That He should raise the dead to life or perform other miracles, is but what we might expect, since He is the Lord of nature and the Giver of life. That He should be transfigured, and that the Divinity should shine in Him, we should

not wonder, since He is the Son of God. Indeed, the wonder is that in Him the Divinity should be hidden under the covering of our humanity, and that the glory of the Godhead was not made manifest in Him at all times.

But this is remarkable beyond all that we can conceive; that He Who is sanctity itself, the all pure, all holy Son of God, should allow Himself to be tempted by the devil. For, what alliance can there be between the Son of God and that foul spirit? Such a thing, we know, was not due to Him. For, though He became in all things like us; "yet without sin," says the great Apostle. His infinite holiness could not let it approach Him; could not brook even that His holy Mother should for a moment be defiled with it. And yet, though without sin, the Saviour of the world would submit to the temptation of it. And this He did for our sakes, in order, namely, that He might teach us by His example how we are to overcome it.

2. It was very charitable, dearly beloved, and very condescending on our Lord's part to thus allow Himself to be tempted for our sakes. For there is no man without temptation. No; temptation tries all men. Temptation was found among the angels long ago, and laid desolate the very courts of the Lord. Temptation entered Paradise, we know with what disastrous consequences to the whole human race. Temptation was found in the very school of Jesus Christ, and laid low not only Judas, but even Peter, the corner stone on which the Church was built. Temptation tries all men. It enters the holiest places; comes upon us at the most conse-

crated moments; invades the holiest states. It tries us especially and with the greatest vehemence when we become converted to a better life, and propose to ourselves to strive for perfection. Of this we are warned in Scripture. "When thou beginnest to serve God," says St. James, "prepare thy soul for temptation." And no wonder. For the arch-enemy cannot without envy see a soul enter on the way of perfection; and, hence, he tries most vehemently to enslave such a one before it attains the strength begotten of sanctity.

We read in the *Morals of St. Gregory* of how a holy man on entering a certain city found a devil lolling lazily at one of the gates, while, around a religious house further on, was a whole concourse of devils engaged in tempting the inmates. And we read in the *Lives of the Saints* of the violent and extraordinary temptations to which many of them were subjected by the devil.

3. You will then, dearly beloved, have to expect temptations, and strong ones, and you will meet them everywhere—in your own homes, it may be, from the selfishness and ill-humor of your relatives. You, fathers and mothers, will have to bear the trials coming from a wayward child who will do everything to vex and contradict you, and even were your children all that could be desired, you will have to meet with many temptations incident to the rearing and the providing for a family. While, on the other hand, you, sons and daughters, may have a peevish mother to put up with, or a drunken father, who spoils and wastes the earnings of the family and brings on you humiliation and disgrace before your

neighbors. You will meet temptation when walking along the street, where your eyes and ears will be assailed with offensive sights and words.

You, young men, will be tempted by your companions at work or play. They will solicit you to go to gambling houses or saloons, or, worse still, to the haunts of the vicious and degraded, where your souls will be soused in the mire of sensual acts. Foul-mouthed men will shout into your ears words so loathsome, so contagious, that worse could not be heard outside the gates of hell.

And you, dear young women, especially, God help you, will have your virtue assailed on every side. Every young libertine that passes along the way; aye, and every old libertine that passes along the way, thinks he has a right to assail your honor and your virtue, and unless you act with strictest prudence you will leave his society robbed of the grace of God and of your peace of soul, to be ever afterwards perhaps a prey to awakened passions that will beset and torture you through life.

Temptations then you will meet with at every step and in every circumstance of your career. The devil, the great arch-enemy of man, will assail you; for "our warfare is not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, the rulers of this dark world."

The world will tempt you, that great sinful world which contradicts the teaching of Jesus Christ, and which, therefore, has merited His reprobation. See how the world conducts itself in regard to virtue, the many snares it lays for souls to catch and enslave them—in its customs—in its literature—in its

art, its pictures, its statues—in its journals—in its amusements—in its conversations—in the things that it not only tolerates, but encourages. Oh, "love not the world, or the things of the world"; for "if any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him".

But even if we had no evil spirits to tempt us, if there were no world to scandalize us, if we were caught up into the air and transported into a region where neither man nor devil could follow us, still would we have reason to fear, for we have that within us which will tempt us powerfully, and that is our own unsubdued flesh—that foul earthly thing with animal passions and vile inclinations which we call the body. Yes, for though we were redeemed by Jesus Christ, though we were regenerated by Baptism, yet does there dwell in us the *"fomes peccati,"* the incentive to sin, the concupiscence of the flesh, of which the Apostle so often complains.

Temptations you will, then, meet with at every step and in every circumstance of your career. And it was very charitable of our Lord, I say, to teach us by His own example how we are to repel them.

II.

They Can Be Made the Instrument of Our Chief Good.

1. But though we may expect temptations, and strong ones, at every stage of our lives, this ought not to discourage us, for God will give us grace to overcome them. And this, dearly beloved, ought to be our greatest consolation—the thought that God will not abandon us, but will, if we are faithful to grace, make issue with the temptation so that it may not overcome us.

2. Nay, more, if God permits us to be tempted, He has given us in temptation the opportunity of gaining most glorious victories over our spiritual enemies. Most glorious victories, I say, for the least victory gained in the spiritual life is indeed more glorious than all the triumphs of the heroes. The least thing that concerns the spiritual life is more important than the most important things that concern the things of this world. A temptation overcome, therefore, by an old woman or a little child is more glorious than the greatest triumphs of the warriors. For, what do the victories of warriors concern? The extending of the limits of the territories of peoples merely. And a victory gained over temptation, What? The extension of the territory of God Himself, the territory won by the combats and death of Jesus Christ.

3. Still further, He has given in temptation the opportunity of gaining untold merits, of adding gems to our crown of glory, of winning crowns immortal.

It is told in the *Lives of the Fathers of the Desert* that one day a holy old hermit saw in vision seven most resplendent crowns prepared for a young man who had put himself under his direction. Struck with amazement at the sight, he asked the young man when he came at evening for his blessing what he had been doing during the day.

"Father," said he, "I was engaged as on the preceding days, in the work imposed on me by your orders."

Being pressed still further, he told how during the day he had been grievously tempted seven times, but that by the grace of God he had been victorious.

And here his superior saw the exemplar of his vision. He earned a seven-fold crown by reason of a seven-fold victory over temptation.

4. You see then that temptation is not an unmixed evil, but that through the providence of God it has been made to serve as the instrument of our highest good. Resist temptation, then, faithfully all your life; *"age viriliter"*; "act manfully"; look to the example of Jesus Christ, your Captain and Leader in the warfare of life; seek His protection in prayer; with His holy help you will overcome and the short and light trial here will form the source of your chief glory in heaven.

SECOND SERMON: TEMPTATIONS—THE MEANS TO OVERCOME THEM.

1. In order that we gain the mastery over temptation we must, first, never thrust ourselves unnecessarily into its occasions; second, when it comes upon us we must fight it promptly, vigorously, and perseveringly.

To put ourselves unnecessarily in an occasion of temptation would be an act of supreme folly, since only a miracle of grace could save us from succumbing to it. Sad examples from Scripture. The wilfully and unnecessarily going into an occasion of sin, itself a sin, and that of double nature: first, against the virtue put in jeopardy, and second, of presumption.

2. Many dally with temptations; those are unfaithful guardians of their souls. Our souls with their faculties and powers compared to a fortified city surrounded with entrenchments; like courageous commanders, we must meet the enemy at the outposts. If we do, we are assured of victory.

3. Temptation, the assassin of our souls: At its onslaught, then, we must rouse all our energies and zeal, and employ all our powers in defense of that which is the very center of our being; nor should we desist from prayer and circumspection till, finally, the enemy is put to ignominious flight, and our souls are left in peace and triumph.

4. Nor are we to grow tired and yield because of the per-

sistence of its attacks; this would be an ignominious ending to a beginning that promised well.

Moreover, considering the tremendous issues that are at stake, it would be a consummation in the last degree sad and deplorable.

5. The summing up; the glorious reward promised by St. James to him who has been found faithful in temptation.

1. We have seen, dearly beloved, that all our life we will be subject to temptation, and that through the providence of God, temptation successfully overcome, has been made to serve for us as the instrument of our highest good.

But in order that it may be so, and that we gain the mastery over it, two things are to be observed by us; and though these may be put briefly, they contain volumes of wisdom.

These two things are: first, we must never thrust ourselves unnecessarily into its occasions; and, secondly, when it does come on us unsought and undesired, we must fight it promptly, vigorously, and perseveringly.

We must never put ourselves unnecessarily in the occasion of temptation. To do so would be to court disaster, to land ourselves in a position where only a miracle of God could save us.

What would you think of the conduct of a man who cast himself headlong over the brink of a precipice expecting that God would send his angels to save him? A greater folly he commits who goes wilfully and unnecessarily to meet temptation. He expects that God will work a miracle to deliver him from the consequences of his folly.

When, dear brother or sister, you are sent from duty to a post of danger, God will be with you to protect you. He will give you the grace pertaining to your state, the grace to meet the occasion; but wilfully and unneces-

sarily expose yourself to the same danger on another occasion, and you fall! You fall miserably, shamefully! Who more valiant than David? Who more wise than Solomon? Who stronger than Samson? And yet these great men who had come unscathed out of a thousand dangers which they encountered at the call of duty, fell, and fell shamefully. And why? Because they exposed themselves unnecessarily to the occasion.

And here, dearly beloved, let me call your attention to a thing you may not have adverted to before; and it is, that he who wilfully and unnecessarily exposes himself to the danger of sin, has already fallen, has already sinned. For the moral law forbids us not only to commit sin, it forbids us further to expose ourselves unnecessarily to the occasions of sin. Mark well what I say. He who wilfully exposes himself to the risk of falling into sin, is already guilty of sin, has already sinned. He is guilty of a sin against the virtue which he exposed himself to the risk of violating, and he is guilty, moreover, of a sin of presumption in expecting that God would deliver him from the inevitable consequences of his foolish conduct. You then who wilfully expose yourselves to the occasion—be it by going into the saloon where formerly you were in the habit of getting drunk, to the theater which was for you an occasion of the indulgence of sensual thoughts, or looks, or acts, be it the going into the company of that young man or that young woman who in the past was your accomplice in evil acts—know for certain that by so doing, by merely exposing yourself to the risk of sin unnecessarily, you are guilty before God and merit His condemnation.

2. Again, I have said that when temptation comes

upon us without our seeking it we must meet it promptly, vigorously and perseveringly.

We must meet temptation promptly. Some people when temptation comes upon them dally with it and neglect to reject it promptly. They allow it to take possession successively of their senses, their imagination, their mind, and only when it presses for the consent of their will do they rouse themselves to repel it. Now those allow an undue advantage to the tempter.

Our souls with their faculties and powers may be compared to a fortified city surrounded with entrenchments. Travel across the continent of Europe through the territory of one of the great military nations. You approach one of the great fortified cities—a Metz, a Strasburg, a Paris, a Rome. Miles before you come to the city proper you see every elevation crowned with ugly fortifications, whose sides bristle with artillery. And as you are borne along you pass through, again, and yet again, systems of encircling fortifications, till at last you approach the great walls dug into the earth, so as to be sheltered from assault by the accompanying fosse or ditch; and, lastly, on the most advantageous site dominating the entire city, the citadel, the last great defense to which the defending army can retire in case of their being driven from the earthworks without. Our souls, with their powers and faculties, may be compared to such a fortification.

Now, what would you say of the military commander who, being charged with the defence of such a fortress, would allow the enemy to attack the outworks and capture them in detail without making an effort to repel him, and only when he made an assault on the city itself would he rouse himself to strike a blow for the safety

of the place and its inhabitants? Well, such is the conduct of one who allows temptation to take possession of his senses, his imagination, his mind, without at once rising to repel it.

No, brethren, we must meet the enemy at the outposts, and, like courageous defenders, dispute the country inch by inch. Or, rather, if we are faithful in repelling temptation promptly, God's grace will enable us to prevent it from coming within striking distance of the citadel of our souls.

3. We must fight temptation vigorously. The instinct of self-preservation impels us to repel the assassin who with lethal weapon makes an assault on us; and shall we not resist vigorously temptation, which is the assassin of our souls? Yes, temptation is the assassin of our souls, and it comes with the intent to deprive us of our true life—the grace of God. At its onslaught, then, should not concern for our immortal souls which are in peril rouse all our energy and zeal, and should we not muster all our powers in defence of that which is the center of our being, our very self? Nor should we desist from prayer and self-circumspection till, finally, the enemy is put to ignominious flight and our souls are left in peace and triumph.

4. And, lastly, we must meet temptation perseveringly.

Now, some fight temptation vigorously for a time, but at length they grow tired, lay down their arms, and yield to its seductions. To say the least this is a cowardly and ignominious ending to a beginning that promised well; but when we consider the tremendous issues that are at stake in regard to our immortal souls, then such a consummation becomes in the last degree sad and deplorable.

5. Take example, then, from your Captain and Commander, Jesus Christ, and fight temptation zealously at all times. Avoid as far as may be its assaults, and never thrust yourself foolishly into its occasions. But if it comes upon you, as it will, unsought and undesired, then, like courageous soldiers, meet it; aye, meet it promptly, vigorously, and perseveringly. Thus will you overcome, and merit the reward promised by St. James in his Epistle: "Blessed is the man who suffereth temptation; for, when he shall overcome he shall obtain the crown, the crown of life, which God hath prepared for those that love Him."

THIRD SERMON: SENSUALITY—FASTING; THEIR RESPECTIVE FRUITS.

"At that time, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterwards He was hungry," etc.—Matt. iv, 1-11.

1. Introduction. The double capacity in which our blessed Lord appears amongst us as man and as God, shown, on the one hand, by His suffering hunger, by praying, and by His being tempted by the devil; and, on the other, by His subsisting without food for forty days, by repelling with Divine power the assaults of the devil, and, finally, by His being ministered to by angels. The season suggests that occasion be taken to make some remarks relative to the precept of fasting.

2. The Saviour had grave reasons for giving sanction to the practice of fasting by His own fast in the desert. The history of the true Church on earth shows that the practice of fasting was common among the faithful in all times, with the Jews and during the period of the law of nature, as well as in Christian times.

3. And if we look for the reason, we shall find that it was the contrary vice of sensuality that brought about the greatest evils that afflicted mankind. As proof of this, see the fall of our first parents in Paradise brought about by eating the forbidden fruit; the calamity of the deluge; the destruction of

Sodom and Gomorrah; the idolatry of the Israelites in the desert, and their punishment.

4. On the other hand, what examples of the many blessings obtained from God, and of the many evils averted through fasting and penances, does not the same history afford us? Summary: the delivery and restoration brought about by the fast and penance ordered by Mardochai.

And in individual cases, see the giving to Israel the greatest of her judges, Samuel; the rise of her champion, Samson; the triumphs of Elias, Judith, Moses; the spiritual achievements of St. John the Baptist, and the saints of Christian times.

5. A last example, the overthrow of the enemies of God's people brought about through a general fast ordered by the pious King Josaphat. This is a figure of the triumph we gain over the world, the flesh, and the devil, through means of the Lenten fast and penance.

6. Appeal.

1. In no scene of our Lord's life is there brought home to us more vividly the double capacity in which He appears amongst us, than in this that I have read for you from the Gospel of today.

In it we behold Him, on the one hand, suffering the pangs of hunger, praying to His Heavenly Father, and tempted by the devil, even as we; and, on the other, subsisting for forty days and nights without nourishment of any kind, repelling the tempter with Divine power and scorn, and, finally, ministered to by angels as the Son of God. Without treating of those apparently contradictory manifestations of our blessed Lord, each of which would claim a sermon for itself, let me, as the season suggests, make some remarks relative to the precept of fasting which the Church has instituted in memory of the fast of our Lord, and which all Catholics worthy of the name practise in those days, in compliance with her decrees.

2. And, first, I say that it was not without grave

reasons that the Saviour gave sanction to the universal practice of fasting, by His own fast in the desert.

When we cast a glance over the history of the true Church on earth, whether it be the Catholic Church, or the Church of the Jews as it existed before the coming of our Lord, or that which existed under the law of nature back to the first days of creation, we find on all sides evidence to show that the practice of fasting was common among the faithful, and that through it many benefits were conferred upon them. If, I say, we go back year by year and century by century of the Church's life, we find the Lenten fast religiously observed by the faithful. We find, on the one hand, the holy regulations of the bishops and councils to fix its limits, define what was lawful and what was not lawful to be eaten during the holy season, and determine how the Lent was to be observed; and the faithful, on the other, submit themselves to the regulations laid down by their pastors and fulfil them with a holy enthusiasm and joy.

If, furthermore, we take up the pages of the Old Testament we see the whole calendar of the Jews studded with its days of fasting and abstinence, its days of prayer and general mourning. Nay, we have the threat of God that that man's name be blotted out of the Book of Life who should refuse to join in the solemn fast and mourning prescribed in the Jewish Law.

And if we go back further still to the days of the patriarchs and of the law of nature, here again we come upon the same salutary practice among men.

3. And why, you will ask, this universal practice of fasting in ancient times, as in our days; in the Church of the Jews and of the patriarchs, as well as in that

founded by Jesus Christ; in the days of the Prophet Elias, as well as in our own?

Well, dear brethren, we shall understand something of the reason for it if we bear in mind that it was the contrary vice of sensuality that brought about the greatest evils that afflict mankind. What was it that, in the first place, brought about the destruction of our first parents in Paradise? Was it not sensuality, or the gratification of the pleasure of the taste? "The fruit," says Scripture, speaking of *the Fall* "appeared fair to the eye and beautiful to behold." And Eve, judging that a fruit so fair to the eye must have a delicious taste, "did eat thereof, and she did give to Adam and he did eat." It was sensuality, then, or the unlawful indulgence in eating that brought about our fall.

If from this source of our misfortunes we descend the stream of time, we behold on the right hand and on the left the evils brought upon our race through the same shameful vice. What was it that brought about the huge catastrophe of the deluge? Ah, my brethren, the waters of *the flood* rolled mountains high, but higher still in the sight of heaven mounted the flood of sensuality that affected the whole human race and made God even repent that He had created man.

And if we come down further still, behold another most dreadful calamity by reason of the same fatal sin. "The region about the Jordan," says Holy Scripture, "was rich, and well watered, and well fitted for grazing and tillage," and it was on account of its natural advantages that Lot chose it for his home. But by how much the richer was the soil, by how much the more were its inhabitants privileged by heaven; by so much did they the more indulge their love for sensual pleas-

ures. And so greatly was Almighty God displeased with their abominable irregularities that He rained down fire and brimstone from heaven upon them and destroyed the whole region, containing five populous cities. And to this day the waters of the Dead Sea roll, a monument of God's anger over what was one of the most smiling portions of the earth.

Nor are these the only signal examples of chastisements brought upon mankind by reason of the sinful indulgence of their appetites.

We read in the Pentateuch that the people of God, while Moses was on Mount Horeb, sinned by sensuality, and from sensuality they fell into other crimes. "They sat down to eat and to drink," says Scripture, "and they rose up to dance and to play,"—at bad games and idolatry. And God, to punish their sin, commanded the faithful Levites to unsheath the sword and to cut their way through the camp. Nor did they desist till the blood of three and twenty thousand corpses dyed the sward on which was pitched the camp of Israel.

These, dear brethren, are a few examples, a very few, but yet the most striking of the evils that follow from sensuality, which is nothing else than the unlawful indulgence of sensual gratifications.

4. But, on the other hand, what examples does not the same history afford us of the blessings obtained from God, and of the many evils averted through fasting and mortification? The people of God at various times incurred the Divine anger. How often did they not fall into idolatry and other crimes? How did they avert the chastisements that were in store for them? It was always by penance and fasting. If they were attacked by their enemies; if a great calamity had fallen on

them; if they were struck down with the plague; if the heavens became as brass and refused to give moisture to refresh the thirsty earth, and a great famine followed—in all calamities, if the people turned to God by penance and fasting, they were delivered from their evils. The multitude murmured against God. They fell into idolatry. They committed the crimes of the Gentiles. It was fasting and penance that restored them again to prosperity and God's friendship.

During the captivity of Babylon a wicked man plotted the destruction of the whole race of the Israelites. A universal fast was proclaimed, and, as a result, not only were they delivered from death, but there was brought about their restoration to their native land with all their ancient privileges and a great share of their former prosperity as a nation.

And if we turn from the examples of general fasts that are given in sacred history and from the benefits that followed from them, to individual fasts and to individual benefits obtained thereby, how beautiful the custom amongst the ancient peoples and how salutary! It was the prayer of the fasting Anna that gave to Israel the greatest of her judges, Samuel. Samson, the champion of Israel, was born and nurtured in fasting. By fasting Elias brought humiliation on the enemies of God and sealed up the heavens that they should not bedew the land for three years and a half. By fast Judith obtained power from God to slay the enemy of her people. By fast Moses obtained the pardon of those who transgressed the Divine commands. By fast John the Baptist became worthy to be the Precursor of Jesus Christ and the preacher of a salutary penance to the Jews. By fast all the saints of Jesus Christ have tri-

umphed over the enemies of their salvation and obtained the promised goal.

5. A most striking example of the efficacy of fasting when joined to prayer and trust in God is given in the Book of Chronicles. It is there stated that on a certain occasion the land of Juda was invaded by the armies of three powerful kings, who entered into a league for the destruction of the people of God. The Israelites, with their pious king, Josaphat, were in great trepidation. The whole land was filled with lamentation. They retired into their walled cities and into the interior of their houses. They ran before their king and clamored that he might obtain that their lives be spared. He was a man who feared God, and he knew that help was to be obtained only from heaven. So he ordered a general fast with prayer to be proclaimed throughout the land. The people obeyed his command. They fasted, neither eating nor drinking for three days; and on the fourth day, when he was about to lead them against their enemies, they looked out from their watch towers, and, behold, to the astonishment and joy of all, the whole plain as far as the eye could reach was strewn with the corpses of their fallen foes. Yes, at the fast and penance of His people the heart of God was softened, and, without raising a hand, behold, their enemies laid low, slain by His powerful right arm.

Dear brethren, in our days, as, indeed, in all time, the territories of God's people, the precious souls redeemed by Jesus Christ are attacked by a coalition of three powerful tyrants, and they are, as described by St. John, "the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life," or, to describe them in plain language, the spirit of pride, and of

avarice, and of lust. These tyrants grievously afflict God's people, and threaten their eternal destruction. What means then shall we adopt to repel their evil assaults and preserve the supernatural life of our souls?

6. Oh, let us, and especially in those days consecrated to prayer and penance, in imitation of God's chosen people, and after the still holier example of our blessed Lord, be faithful in fulfilling the fast ordered by the Church; and let us further make that fast acceptable to God by prayer and contrition for our past sins. Then when the holy Easter morning arrives it will find our enemies weakened and dispersed, ourselves restored to the liberty and peace of a good conscience, and our Prince and Captain, Jesus Christ, on His triumphant Resurrection from the tomb, permitted to reign over the holy land of our souls in perennial peace and glory.

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT.

FIRST SERMON: MORTAL SIN—AN INJURY DONE TO GOD.

1. Introduction The first duty of the Christian and interior soul is to remove the obstacles that prevent her union with God. Mortal sin the greatest obstacle, since it is incompatible with the formal principle of this union, which is sanctifying grace. Hence, the first work of the Holy Ghost in sinners is to destroy sin in justification.

2. Compunction for sin, the foundation of the spiritual life; its sanctifying effects in the soul. Hence, with the saints, the greater their holiness, the greater was their compunction. This my justification for treating of such a disagreeable subject.

3. Definition of mortal sin. An offense infinite in its malice. This shown from the nature, perfectly simple, of God, and from its aim, which is to dispute His very fundamental prerogative as Sovereign of all. Of this aim we have a striking example in the revolt of the rebellious angels.

4. Mortal sin successful in its attempt against the life of God, in its causing the death of Jesus Christ. Our sins the cause of that death; they were represented at every stage of His most bitter Passion. Should not the sight of the crucifix then awaken in our hearts the liveliest compunction for our past sins?

5. Further still, our sins renew again the ignominies of Christ's Passion, and tear open once again the wound inflicted on His Sacred Heart. Tender reproach of Jesus Christ to the sinner: "Why dost thou persecute Me?" Sins of Christians more inexcusable than those of His pagan persecutors.

6. Appeal.

1. The first thing that a Christian and interior soul has to do in the work of her interior renovation is, say ascetic writers, to remove the obstacles which prevent her union with God. The greatest of these obstacles is mortal sin. That mortal sin is an obstacle to the supernatural and divine life is easy to comprehend, since it is incompatible with the formal principle of this life, which is grace. It is a wall of separation between God and us. Hence, the first work of the Holy

Ghost in sinners is to destroy mortal sin in justification. He will afterwards build on those blessed ruins.

2. Compunction for sin has been accounted then as the foundation of the spirtual life. It renders us safe; it humbles us; it throws us into the arms of God; it purifies our intentions; it softens our heart; it renders us more susceptible of the impulses of the Holy Ghost; it withdraws us from creatures; it prepares us for the highest effects of Divine love. Hence, with the saints, the greater their holiness, the more were they filled with compunction for sin. This is why, my dear people, though many of you have happily little to do with mortal sin; yet, the subject of mortal sin is one that can by no means be omitted from the program of sermons to be preached before a general congregation.

And now I shall confine myself in this discourse to consider mortal sin as an injury done to God.

3. And, first, what is mortal sin?

It is described in the Catechism to be "a grievous offense against God which deprives the soul of sanctifying grace, and merits for him who is guilty of it the everlasting punishment of hell." It is, in the first place, a grievous offense against God; that is to say, it is an injury dealt Him by the sinner who assails Him in a most unworthy manner. That offense is great, nay, infinite, in its malice; for, it attempts nothing less than the destruction of the Eternal. It assails His attributes. It disputes His authority, His sovereignty, His unity, and by so doing it would, were it possible, work the destruction of the Almighty.

To show you this more clearly, let me lay down what is of Faith, and say that the nature of God is perfectly simple—that His attributes are inseparable from one

another and from His nature, with which they form but one thing. He together with them forms but one sole, everabiding perfection, one omnipotent power, one all-governing authority, one Infinite Being.

Now, what do you when in your folly you commit mortal sin? You resist the authority of God; you make your own will and pleasure the object of your actions; you dispute the very fundamental prerogative of God as Sovereign of all—His dominion over the actions of His creatures; and as such, I say, you make an attempt upon the very life of God Himself. Of this aim of mortal sin we have an example in the conduct of the first sinner who, even in the very precincts of Heaven itself, set up the standard of revolt and disputed the right of the Almighty as Sovereign of all. "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit on the Mountain of the Covenant on the North side: I will ascend above the height of the clouds: I will be like to the Most High." And when the Sacred Humanity of our Lord, Jesus Christ, was proposed to the angels by the Eternal Father as an object of worship and obedience, he rose up amid the ranks of his rebellious followers, and said: "I will not serve."

This is the aim of every sinner who has committed mortal sin, from that first uprising of Satan and his followers in Heaven, down to the disobedience of our first parents in Paradise, down to the wicked act of the youngest culprit who has this day opposed his will to the will of the Almighty.

4. I have said that mortal sin is an attempt against the life of God; and so it is; and were sin to have its way God Himself, the Principle of all things, would be no more. Aye, and would to Heaven it had not been so

successful as it has been! For, in very truth, it has taken the life of God away; not, indeed, His essential life, which is His by the very force of His being; but the temporal life which the Son of God assumed for love of us—it has taken that life away. When He came down from Heaven to live among us, mortal sin came, and with ruthless hand and with murderous design it took that Son of God and put Him to a cruel death. Ah, my brethren, see what mortal sin has done. It has taken away the life of the innocent Lamb of God, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

When our first father, Adam, went out into the fields and came upon the body of his son, Abel, whom his brother, Cain, had murdered; seeing him bathed in his blood, the living color of his countenance effaced, his eyes glazed, his limbs stark in death, he was so stricken that he seemed beside himself with grief; and, knowing that he was the cause of the evil, and that by his disobedience he had brought death into the world, he redoubled his penitential exercises.

Dearly beloved, when we enter into this Church and see hanging on the Cross the figure of our Saviour, covered with Blood, crowned with thorns, the light of His eyes extinguished, His hands and feet dug through with nails, and His life Blood issuing from His open side; how is it possible that we can have the hardihood to commit mortal sin knowing that it was our sins that reduced Him to this pitiable condition?

Yes, for it was not Adam's sin alone that did this injury to the Saviour. We also were represented there when Christ was slain for sin. We were there when the Saviour was so afflicted in the Garden of Gethsemani that His Precious Blood was made to issue out

through every pore of His Sacred Body. Our sins it was that drugged the chalice of His Passion with the poisoned draught of hell. Our mortal sins were there when the soul of the Saviour was so charged with sorrow that He was constrained to cry out: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death." Our mortal sins it was that urged on His executioners to lay on Him unheard-of tortures. It was our sins that caused His Body to be scourged till His very ribs were laid bare with the leaded whips of the soldiers. It was our mortal sins that pierced His venerated brow with thorns, that nailed Him to His cross, and, finally, brought Him to the shameful death of Calvary. O dearly beloved, see what injuries mortal sin, our sins, have done to our God. We have nailed Him to the cross; we have taken away the life of Him to Whom all things owe their being. Should we not weep, therefore, and do penance for our sins, aye, with greater earnestness than Adam did, since we have before us the daily evidence of its sad effects?

5. But this is not all; for we have the inspired testimony of St. Paul to say that by our sins we crucify again the Son of God. How is this? "How is it that we who are dead to sin, shall yet live any longer therein?" Is it not a mockery of His blessed death, if, after we were made dead to sin and purchased to a life of grace by the death of Jesus Christ, we should yet continue to live in sin? Yes, our sins renew again the ignominies of His Passion and tear open once again the wound then inflicted on His Sacred Heart.

It is to you, then, sinful soul, that the Saviour addresses this complaint that He made before now to St. Paul on the road to Damascus: "Why dost thou persecute Me?" Ah, listen to that tender reproach of the

Saviour: "Why dost thou persecute Me? You persecute Me more cruelly than did that infidel prince who ravaged the treasures of My Temple. You destroy in yourself by sin the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the precious treasures of grace which cost Me so much to purchase for you. You persecute Me in My dwelling place. Herod drove Me from Bethlehem long ago. You expel Me from your heart which I had sanctified and wherein I had proposed to Myself to dwell. You persecute Me in My honor. Pilate put Me in comparison with Barabbas; you put Me on an equality—with what? With a vile creature satisfaction, and you prefer it to Me. You persecute Me in My person. The soldiers crucified Me only once. They knew not what they did. You crucify Me every time that you offend Me mortally, and you know right well the evil that you do. You disregard My laws, I Who am your Judge; you care not for My promises nor My threats; you fear not to displease Me, I Who am your Father and your Saviour; you persecute Me in spite of the ancient love that I testified to you in My Incarnation and My Passion, and you do it for the satisfaction of a passion unworthy of you." Yes, brethren, mortal sin is a grievous and a bitter offense against the Lord, our God.

Let us weep, then, over the sins of mankind; and let us be filled with a compunction, bitter and life-long, for our own past sins; that thus we may appease God's anger justly kindled against us, and make amends to Him for the many injuries we have done Him in our past lives.

SECOND SERMON: FASTING AND MORTIFICATION—A MEANS OF ATONEMENT FOR PAST SINS.

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil, and when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterwards He was hungry."—Matt. iv, 1-2.

1. Introduction. The astounding mystery of a God's being tempted is commented on. The temptation was not confined to the three assaults spoken of in the Gospel, but it was an issue that took up all of the forty days during which Jesus remained in the desert.

2. The practice of fasting and self-denial was no new thing introduced into the world by our Lord; it existed from the beginning, and it seems consonant with the penitential and humiliating condition of fallen man. Fasting and other penitential works being then customary and of obligation with men, it seems strange that the early "reformers" should have condemned the practice and pinned their hope of justification on faith alone without works. In opposition to this false teaching of Protestantism I assert that fasting, or self-denial, is necessary.

3. And first, it is necessary as a part of penance enjoined on us by God by which to satisfy for our past sins. Why it is so enjoined on us.

4. Can we be so blind as to think that we have no need of those practices of penance? Our whole past lives rise up and convict us of innumerable sins. Conclusion, to practise mortification at all times, but especially during the holy season that we are passing through.

1. These incidents of the temptation and fast of our blessed Saviour in the desert seem to have attracted the concentrated attention of commentators more than perhaps any others of His life.

And, first, the energy of the Evangelists' statements is commented on. St. Matthew, as we see, simply states that our blessed Lord "was led by the Spirit into the desert."

In the cognate passage of St. Luke's Gospel it is said that "Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, was impelled by the Spirit into the desert."

St. Mark employs a more energetic term still in saying that "He was thrust out by the Spirit into the desert," to show the active influence exercised over Him by the Holy Ghost as a result of His Baptism in the Jordan.

Then, the purpose of this retirement of our Saviour into the wilderness is sought. That purpose is no doubt the one given in the above passage, and it was none other than that He might be tempted by the devil. The New Adam, He came to take up the combat at the point where the first Adam had failed and fled, and to turn defeat into victory.

"Now what astounds us in the inspired record," says a noted writer,* "is not so much the wonders wrought then and there, as is the simple fact of a God's being tempted." Could the world have anything wherewith to seduce a Divine Nature? Where was the merit in such a victory for a soul which could not sin? And, then, greatest difficulty of all, what impression could temptation have upon a nature in which there was no appetite for evil? The Saviour having taken no part in the perversion of our humanity, could not know those desires which awaken within us without our consent, and which nevertheless are our own, because we can detect therein either the promptings of past faults or the seed sown by inherent concupiscence. At every step the mind must halt before the brink of an abyss, and of necessity we must acknowledge that here the mystery of the Incarnation presents one of its features which still remains shrouded in deepest obscurity to mortal ken. And then that we may the better comprehend the mystery we are to remember that our Lord's time of trial was not limited to the three assaults whose details are known to us, but that it was an issue consuming all of

*The Abbe Fouard.

the forty days during which Jesus remained in the desert. During all this time He was tempted. "And now," says St. Paul, "He can have compassion on our infirmities, for, without sinning, He hath been subject to all our temptations." (Heb. iv, 15.)

Appalled at the deep mysteries involved in the Temptation, let us direct our attention rather to the example of the Saviour's forty days' fast on the occasion.

2. And I say, first of all, that the practice of fasting, or mortification, was no new thing introduced into the world by our Lord. It existed from the beginning, and it seems consonant with the penitential and humiliating condition of fallen man. Hence, do we read of the many examples of these practices among the holy men and women of old, as Moses, Job, Elias, etc.; those who were the most distinguished in Jewish history. The Pharisee in the Gospel, then, only exemplified a common custom among the pious when he said in his prayer in the temple: "I fast twice in the week," and the zealots for observance put the question to our Lord: "Why do not Your disciples fast like those of John the Baptist?" To which our Blessed Lord replied: "It is not meet that the children of the Bridegroom should fast as long as the Bridegroom is with them; but the days shall come when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast."

In prosecution of this implied command of our Lord, no sooner was He the Bridegroom of souls taken away from the Church by death, than the Apostles established the custom of fasting on Friday and Saturday in memory of His death and burial. At this time, also, or, at least, shortly afterwards grew up in the Church the great Lenten fast in imitation of His forty days' fasting in the desert.

All antiquity then and the uninterrupted tradition of the Church from apostolic times consecrating the practice of fasting: is it not strange that the early "reformers" should have condemned it as a superstition coming down from what they were pleased to call the "dark ages"; and that they should pin their hope of salvation on the principle of justification without works, and by faith alone?

In opposition to this false teaching of Protestantism, I say that fasting or mortification is necessary.

3. And first, it is necessary as a part of the penance enjoined on us by God by which to satisfy for our past sins.

That it is so might be proved from innumerable passages of Scripture, but from none more clearly than from the prophet Joel, quoted in the epistle of the Mass of Ash Wednesday: "Therefore, saith the Lord, 'be converted to Me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning, and rend your hearts, and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God.'" In this the prophet joins fasting, or mortification, to weeping and mourning, which are the essential characteristics of true penance.

And it was becoming that God should prescribe self-denial or mortification as a necessary part of penance, since self-indulgence of one sort or another is the occasion of most of the sins we commonly fall into.

When I say that mortification is a part of penance enjoined on us by God, I do not mean that by it we make atonement to God's justice for sin. Christ, our Lord, being God as well as Man, was alone capable of making atonement for even the least sin: and we know that by His sufferings and death He has made superabundant atonement for the sins of the whole

world. But in order that the fruit of His atonement may be applied to our souls for the reparation of sin, He requires this of us, viz.: that we make some chastisement of ourselves a part of our penance, so that by thus bearing His mortification in our bodies we become His living copies. And it is this requirement that St. Paul refers to when, in His epistle to the Colossians, he says, "I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting to the suffering of Christ in my flesh." (Col. 1, 24.)

Neither does the remission of sin cease to be a gratuitous mercy on the part of God because of this requirement, since our works, being those of creatures, can never of themselves win His favor. Nor is this grace less gratuitous or less stupendous, because it can be obtained only on the conditions laid down by Him Who mercifully grants it. To expect of God the pardon of our sins on any other conditions than those laid down by the Divine law would be inordinate, because it would imply a flat contradiction of the appointments and the unchangeable decrees of Divine justice. We must, therefore, arm ourselves with a holy indignation against ourselves. We must wilfully punish our criminal flesh, and execute upon ourselves something of that justice which our sins deserve, in order to disarm the justice of God, the infinite weight of which we shall otherwise one day fall under.

That mortification is an excellent part of penance, is shown by many examples from sacred Scripture. The inhabitants of the great and wicked city of Nineveh had provoked the Almighty by their crimes, and the Divine vengeance was about to fall upon them. At the preaching of Jonas, however, the people believed in

God and did penance. They observed a severe fast. They mortified themselves, sprinkling ashes upon their heads, and clothing themselves with sackcloth. They prayed to the Lord with all their strength. And He, seeing that they had turned from their evil ways and done penance, had mercy on them, and turned aside the shafts of His anger that were ready to destroy them.

How many times did not the Jews obtain pardon of God by their prolonged fasts and mortifications? God Himself expressly enjoined on them these works when He called on them to turn away from sin. "Be converted to the Lord with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning, and rend your hearts and not your garments."

4. Can we be so blind as to think that we have no need of being converted to the Lord in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning? Oh, our whole past lives rise up against us and convict us of numberless sins—sins of malice; sins of frailty; sins of omission and commission; sins of neglect and ignorance; sins of thought, and word, and action; sins by which we have defiled every organ and sense of our body and every faculty of our soul; sins by which we have transgressed every commandment and every duty; sins against God, our neighbor, and ourselves; sins in public and in private; sins of scandal; sins, in short, committed every day of our lives since we began to know God; sins multiplied beyond the number of the hairs of our head. Hitherto what penance have we done?

Alas, if we place our weak endeavors side by side with the maxims of the Gospel, with the instructions and exhortations of the early Fathers, with the lives of true penitents, how much do we not find ourselves wanting in? How should we not tremble when we con-

sider our extreme remissness in complying with this essential duty? Have we up to this begun to do penance as we ought? We stand upon the brink of eternity. Some of our acquaintances die around us every day. Soon, ah, very soon, will our turn come, and when we are once called out of life, there will be no possibility of our doing a voluntary penance.

Let us hasten, therefore, to make up our accounts with our offended God before death overtakes us. Oh, "it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" before we have seriously begun to appease His justice by works of penance in atonement for our past sins. Let us mortify ourselves at all times, but especially during the holy season we are now passing through as a time specially consecrated to this holy practice. Thus, and thus alone, may we hope to receive hereafter the reward of true penitents.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT.

FIRST SERMON: DEATH.

"The Wages of Sin is Death."—Rom. vi, 23.

1. Introduction. The meditation on the Eternal Truths being an occupation most rich in fruits of sanctification, and being especially appropriate to the season of Lent, I have purposed to treat of these great subjects on this and on the following Sundays. And first on Death.

It is the special penalty of sin, the one that we are made most of all familiar with, and the one that we shall all have to submit to.

2. What death is: 1st. The separation from all things that we hold dear in the world. 2nd. The dissolution of the man. 3rd. The going down of the body into the grave. 4th. The going forth of the soul before God's tribunal, the rendering of an account to Him of all its acts during life, and the receiving from Him a sentence of reward or punishment. 5th. The fixing of our lot of enjoyment or woe for all eternity. Strength, youth, beauty of person, have but their day, and are as the flowers that fade, and that are cast into the dung pit.

3. Moral reflections on the vanity of earthly advantages, of worldly enjoyments, of family attachments, of sinful indulgences. God's warnings to the sinful soul.

4. Appeal.

1. The meditation on the Eternal Truths is an occupation most pleasing to God, and most rich in fruits of sanctification.

It is an occupation especially appropriate to this season of penance and reformation of life. I purpose, therefore, to address you on this and the following Sundays on these great subjects.

And first, on Death. It is the penalty of sin that we are made most of all familiar with, the one that was threatened by God to all mankind as its peculiar penalty, the one that we shall all one day, willingly or unwillingly, have to submit to.

All the other penalties of sin can be, to some extent, remedied or shunned; but the hand of death no man can stay. The decree has gone forth from Him Whose unfailing judgment rules all things: "On the day that thou sinnest by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou and thy posterity after thee to the last man shall surely die the death."

Hence, the Apostle, in his epistle to the Romans, promises us, all who are born of a sinful stock, that as surely as recompense is due to the laborer after his day of toil, so surely is there due to us all, and we shall all one day receive the stroke of death, the penalty, the wages, of our own, as well as of our first father's sin.

"Wherefore," says the Apostle again, "as by one man sin entered the world, and by sin death; so death passeth upon all men in whom all have sinned."

Death then being due to all, it behooves us while still journeying along the road of life to ponder seriously over its solemn truth, that by so doing we may learn to regulate our lives in such a manner as to be able to meet it when it comes with constancy and well-grounded confidence.

This is the advice to us of the wisest men of antiquity, the ancient philosophers, who teach that the true science of life is to learn to die well, and that it is impossible for one to rise to the practice of solid and constant virtue unless he think often how he is to die. Nay, it is the counsel of Truth Itself speaking to us by the Wise Man, and a counsel that has been acted on by the saints of every age: "In all thy ways remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin."

2. What then is death, "the wages of sin," according to the Apostle? What is this "last end," the very

consideration of which is, by the testimony of the Holy Spirit Himself, sufficient to restrain us from the commission of sin, and which, according to the wise men of old, is so necessary to every one who desires to lead a regular life and to practise solid and constant virtue?

Well, death, dearly beloved, may be considered under many aspects, in each of which a strong motive presents itself to urge us to fly from sin and to practise virtue.

Death is the separation from all things that we hold dear in life; from friends, from family, from home, from all the comforts and conveniences that attach us to the world.

Death is the dissolution of the man, the separation of the soul from the body which was its constant companion throughout all the vicissitudes of life and fortune.

Death is the entering of the body into the cold, silent grave, there to become the prey of rottenness and worms.

Death is the going forth of the soul before the judgment seat of God to render an account of its actions during life, and to receive a sentence of reward or punishment, according as these actions were meritorious or culpable.

To die, in fine, is to be fixed forever in a state of supreme enjoyment with God, or, to be cast into a pit of torment, there to suffer forever an agony of desolation and woe. Such is death in itself and in its inseparable consequences, so difficult to realize amid the cares and pleasures of life, and the thought of which is so terrifying to human nature, that we shrink

while yet we may from contemplating it in all its grim reality.

When we enter into a garden in the Summer time and see its beds and borders decked with flowers of every shape and hue; when we perceive them fill the air with a rich perfume, a feeling of sadness sometimes comes over us, as we think that after a while all this beauty will fade, all this richness of tint and beauty of perfume will disappear, and nothing will be left but shrivelled-up leaves, and faded petals, and withered stems, —that all that which now delights us will be fit only to be plucked up and cast into the dungpit, there to rot with weeds and ordure. And so it is with life, my brethren.

As I look around me in this church and scan the faces that at this moment are lit up with attention, do I not perceive numbers who are in the bloom of health and youth? It saddens me to think that a day will come when every one here, when the youngest and the strongest among us, as well as the old and the feeble, will become shrunk up and withered with the agonies that shall precede the final dissolution—that that body of which you are now perhaps so vain, and which you try to set off with a thousand little arrangements of dress and ornament will become a thing to be cast into the grave, there to moulder into dust.

3. I have said that death separates us from all things that we hold dear in the world.

You are at present vain out of certain advantages of birth or fortune; you pride yourself on the possession of gifts or accomplishments that distinguish you among your fellows. Ah, what will all these avail you in the end? Go to the churchyard yonder and sit in meditation on the silent tomb, and test the truth of the saying

of the Wise Man: "I have seen all things under the sun; and behold, vanity of vanities, and all is vanity."

You are now perhaps charmed with the world—its pleasures, it amusements. It appears to you a fairy land where all is designed for enjoyment. Perhaps you are not content with its lawful delights. Perhaps, like your mother, Eve, you pluck the apple of forbidden pleasure and transgress the Commandments of God. Ah, remember death! Its stern hand is nigh. It may fall upon you in more dreadful form than it did upon Eve when she saw the dead body of her cherished son the prey of the vultures of the desert.

You are attached to your home and family; to your fond parents; to your children. You live for them; you expose your health, your life, to support them. Perhaps you are not afraid to offend God for their sakes. Ah, remember your last end. A day shall come when you will have to quit that home which you were so fond of and to enter into the cold, narrow grave, there to moulder into dust, unthought of, uncared for by the world, aye, even by those very friends for whose sake you do not now fear to offend God. A stranger will inhabit your beloved home, and things will go on "as merry as a marriage bell" without you. An hour shall come when those friends of yours will press for the last time your hand in death, and then a long and last farewell, to meet again only in the realms beyond the grave.

You are at present carried away headlong on the turbulent stream of your passions. You move not hand or foot to fight against the current. You are borne along gaily on the muddy torrent, and think it all so pleasant. Ah, remember! Those waters pour down towards the cataracts of destruction. Perhaps you are

already nearing the point beyond which it will be impossible for you to escape, and after that, nothing awaits you but inevitable ruin. No, on you must go, till at last you see yourself about to be precipitated into hell! Then will you cry out for help, and help will not be given you. "You shall call upon Me in that day," says the Lord, "and I will not hear you." "You have despised My counsel; you have neglected My reprehensions; I also will laugh at your destruction, and mock you when that shall come upon you which you feared. When sudden calamity shall fall upon you, and destruction, as a tempest, shall be at hand; when tribulation and distress shall come upon you; then shall you call upon Me and I will not hear you; you shall seek Me in the morning and you will not find Me."

Such is death, dearly beloved, if we consider it with regard to those things that we shall have to part with at that great and supreme hour.

4. Let us then so detach ourselves from the transitory things of this world, and so pass our lives in innocence and virtue, that when death comes we may look upon it as the joyous summons of the Bridegroom, and be able to cry out with the Apostle: "I have fought the good fight; I have kept the faith; I have run my course; and now I look forward to the reward which the just Judge will give me in that day;" even the crown of life for all eternity.

SECOND SERMON: JUDGMENT.

"In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin."—Eccli. vii, 40.

1. Introduction—The past discourse devoted chiefly to the consideration of death as a separation from the things of this world. Design of the present discourse, the consideration of the things that shall succeed that final separation, and of the life which the soul shall enter on at that supreme moment of our existence.

The consideration of these things it was that exercised a restraining power over men in every age.

The realization of the soul before the judgment seat of God, alone, accompanied solely by its works, and about to receive sentence from God.

2. That which heightens the tragic character of death is that it is uncertain as to the time in which it will take place, and as to the state in which it will find us; circumstances which induced our Lord to compare death to a thief.

3. Conclusion—The remembrance of our last end is not to stop at a barren thought, but the conception of the terrible consequences of a bad death must urge us on in the way of penance and virtue. Comment on our Lord's words: "let your loins be girt," etc.

1. In our last discourse we considered death chiefly as a separation from all those things that we hold dear in this world.

In this we continue the consideration of the same subject. And I say that far more worthy of our deep and earnest consideration are those things that shall succeed that final separation, and the life which the soul will but enter on when it has passed from the prison house of the body.

This it is that the Wise Man primarily speaks of when He says that he who remembers it will never sin. The thought of those things that follow death it was that restrained the fire of passion in men's hearts in every age, caused them to avoid sin and its occasions,

and taught them to lead virtuous lives. It was this thought that caused even the very saints to fear.

And, in fact, what can be more worthy the lifelong meditation of anyone than the great, the supreme issues that are at stake, supreme as regards the soul's destination, the moment of that soul's departure from the body? They are decisive; they are irreparable; they are eternal.

At death the reign of mercy which we were accustomed to from childhood ceases; that of Divine Justice, strict, searching, impartial, begins. In a moment, with the rapidity of thought, the soul finds itself before the Judgment Seat of God, alone, to answer for a lifetime, to give an account of its every thought, and word, and deed, and omission.

Oh, how will the soul of the careless Christian be astonished when it shall find every act and thought of life recorded in the book of Divine Justice, and "every idle word that man shall speak," he shall have to render an account of it before the Sovereign Judge. Quicker than thought its doom is sealed, of eternal happiness with God, or of eternal woe in hell. No excuse received; no fault palliated; no plea valid; no resolution available; no promise accepted. "On whatever side the tree leans, there shall it fall." In whatever state man falls into the hands of the living God, so shall he receive sentence for eternity.

The consequences are irreparable. Man dies but once, and if once he is lost, he is lost forever. If he fall into the hands of God in the state of mortal sin, he is damned for all eternity.

2. That which heightens the tragic character of death is this, that though "it is appointed unto man once to die," though death works such changes in the physi-

cal man, though such fearful issues depend upon it, yet, it is uncertain both as to the time in which it will take place, and as to the state in which it will find us. These things are hidden in the counsels of God. Yes, "at the very hour you think not the Son of Man will come." It is for this reason that our Lord compares death to a thief, who, as you know, in order to compass his designs of robbery, chooses the time of night, when men are buried in sleep, and are least prepared to offer him effectual resistance. It takes away the libertine in the midst of his pleasures. It surprises the ambitious man at the very time that he is most taken up with the prosecution of his designs. It cuts short the career of enjoyment of the young man or woman; whilst even to the aged it comes on with surprise.

Is it not this that we see every day? Is it not this that may happen to you yourselves who listen to me? You count upon time which perhaps will not be yours. A certain year will come for you, and in that year a month, and in that month a day, and in that day an hour when you shall die; but when will that time be? "Amen, I say to you," says Jesus Christ, "You know not the day nor the hour."

It were small matter indeed that we were uncertain as to the time of death if we were at least assured that it would find us in the state of grace; but here again, we are confronted with the most mysterious uncertainty.

In what state shall we be at death? We know not, my brethren, and it was this fearful uncertainty that made the saints tremble even after years of heroic penance and self-sacrifice. We know not. All we can say is that to die in the state of grace is the gift of final perseverance—a special grace which we should daily

beg of God, say the saints, but which we can never merit in strict justice, nor promise ourselves with certainty, because no one knows "whether he is," or will be, then, "worthy of love or hatred"—a grace which St. Hilarian, the patriarch of the monks of Syria, after eighty years of heroic penance, still feared lest he might be deprived of, because it depends on the pure mercy of God.

3. Remember your last end, then, my brethren, but let not your remembrance stop at a barren thought, but let the conception of the terrible consequences of a bad death urge you on in the way of penance and virtue.

Take well to heart the counsel, given by our blessed Lord in the Gospel: "Let your loins be girt, and lamps burning in your hands, and yourselves like men who wait for their lord when he shall return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh they may open to him immediately."

Yes, "let your loins be girt" with the girdle of preparation, and let the burning lamp of your good works "so shine before men that they may glorify your Father Who is in Heaven." Be "like men who wait for their Lord," by the practice of a regular life, and by carrying within your consciences undefiled. Thus you will earn the commendation that follows—"blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching." "Amen, I say to you, that He will gird Himself, and make them sit down to meat, and passing will minister to them. And if He shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so; blessed, aye, thrice blessed, are those servants."

THIRD SERMON: FASTING AND MORTIFICATION. A PRESERVATIVE AGAINST FUTURE SIN.

1. Introduction—The practice of mortification is not only a necessary part of penance by which we atone for past sin, but also a necessary means to strengthen us against the danger of future sin.

2. God in the beginning "made man upright"; but as a consequence of original sin, our lower appetites have got into a state of rebellion against the government of the mind and will; a condition of being which enfeebles us. Hence, we feel a conflict within ourselves, and are become our own most dangerous enemies.

This "law in our members," so general that "every man is tempted."

3. This rebellion of the flesh is strengthened by self-indulgence: Hence, God has appointed that mortification or self-denial be the remedy and the means to which He has attached His victorious graces. Hence, the practice of self-denial so strongly inculcated in Scripture, as a necessary part of our spiritual armor.

4. Those who give themselves up to sin on the plea that their passions are strong, that temptation overpowers them, are to be condemned, because they do not labor to restrain the fury of their lusts, for which continual mortification is, after prayer and the Sacraments, the greatest means given us by God.

Our Lord's fast in the desert an example and an encouragement to us, as well as a sanctification of our austerities, inasmuch as it imparts to them the merits of His.

5. Conclusion—To subject the senses to reason and the body to the soul by a rigorous practice of mortification.

1. You will remember that I addressed you last Sunday on the subject of fasting and mortification. On that occasion I told you that this practice is enjoined on us by God as a necessary part of penance, by which we expiate our past sins.

Today, I return to the same subject, and I do so the more willingly, first, because of the widespread, I might almost say, the general prejudice that exists in the world in our time against its practice; and secondly,

because of its great importance in the economy of our salvation. And I say that even though we had no need of practising mortification as an atonement for our past sins, yet would this holy mortification be a necessary means for strengthening us against the danger of falling into sin.

2. When God created man in the beginning "He made him upright," says Scripture; that is to say, He made him conformable in all his parts, in such fashion that there was a perfect subordination of the lower appetites and powers to the government of the mind and will. But as a consequence of the sin of our first parents the flesh and its lusts, which before were perfectly obedient to the spirit, have got into a state of rebellion. This uprising of the passions against the soul tends to enervate its powers, impair its liberty, and bring it into bondage. Hence, we feel a conflict within ourselves, and through the rebellion of our senses and sensual appetites, which St. Paul calls "the law of our members," we are become our own domestic and most dangerous enemies. The universal character of this conflict is well expressed by St. James where he says: "Every man is tempted, being drawn away by his own concupiscence and allured; then when concupiscence hath conceived it bringeth forth sin."

3. This law or rebellion of the flesh is easily strengthened by indulgence of the sensual appetites so as to render the reformation of bad habits very difficult, so difficult, indeed, that this duty is called in Scripture "the doing violence to ourselves," and "the crucifying of the flesh, with its lusts and affections." Now, this disorder being due, as I have said, to the self-indulgence of our first parents, God has appointed that mortification be a necessary part of the remedy, and the means

to which He has annexed His victorious graces by which we are to conquer this enemy that would otherwise enslave us.

We must always practise mortification, therefore, and exercise a strict control over ourselves. We must curb our inclinations and steadily refuse the least gratification to those that are vicious and dangerous. We must go further and often check our affections even in lawful things, that they may not gain strength and become ungovernable. Hence, the practice of mortification or self-denial is so strongly inculcated in holy Scripture as an indispensable part of the spiritual armor without which we are sure to perish.

This necessity of self-chastisement as a preservative against sin the great Apostle well knew. Hence, we read in his epistle to the Corinthians: "I so run, not as at an uncertainty; I so fight, not as one beating the air; but I chastise my body and bring it into subjection, lest, perhaps, when I preach to others I myself become a castaway." The Apostle knew right well the enemy he had to contend with, and, hence, though favored with the most extraordinary graces, and though confirmed in the habits of virtue, and though worn out with fatigues and sufferings, he despaired of being victorious over his spiritual enemies without the macerations of abstinence and fasting.

Our domestic enemy accompanies us everywhere. If at one time he seems to slumber, it is only that he may attack us the more violently at another. If we pamper our flesh, we arm it and strengthen it against ourselves. "He who shall have treated his slave daintily," says the Wise Man, "will afterwards find him rebellious." "If thou givest thy soul her desires she will make thee the joy of thy enemies."

3. Now, we often meet with people who complain that their passions are strong, that they are scarcely masters of themselves, and that temptations overpower them; and hence they give themselves up unreservedly to sin: to drunkenness, to impurity, to dissipation of every kind; but what they call by the soft name of misfortune is their crime and their condemnation, because they do not labor to restrain the restless fury of their lusts, for which continual mortification is, after prayer and the Sacraments, the great means given us by God.

When Our Lord cast the impure spirit out of the demoniac boy, did He not say that "this kind of spirit is cast out only by prayer and fasting"? What, when our Divine Lord Himself would meet the tempter, did He not prepare Himself for the combat by a fast of forty days in the desert? What need had He Who was incapable of sin, Who had no passions to tame, thus to arm Himself beforehand by fasts and mortifications? Was it not to show us the manner of preparing ourselves to meet our spiritual enemies by a rigid exercise of mortification, as well as to encourage us to undertake austerities and to sanctify our fasts by imparting to them the merit of His?

By these arms the saints conquered. By mortification and fasting it was that they obtained their victories over their own flesh and the powers of hell. It strengthened the just to walk in the paths of innocence and virtue, and it happily restored thousands of penitents to the Divine favor and made them triumphant over their own passions and vicious habits that had long enslaved them. The Gospel tells us that St. John the Baptist was sanctified in his mother's womb. And one of the Doctors of the Church was bold enough to tell us that he felt no more rebellion of the flesh than if

he had lived without a body; yet, his whole life was one of continued fasts and self-denial. What example more sublime, or what instruction could better convey to us the efficacy of this practice than that in which the Gospel represents to us the holy Precursor in the barren wilderness as girt with his leathern girdle and clothed in his camel's hair? "His food," moreover, the Gospel continues, "was locusts and wild honey."

And if he the innocent, if he the most perfect of the saints treats his body so rigorously to keep it in subjection to the soul, what ought those not do who by long habits of sin have strengthened the tyranny of their senses and their vicious affections?

We must, therefore, if we would preserve our souls secure, subject the senses to reason, and the body to the spirit, by a rigid practice of mortification.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT.

FIRST SERMON: HELL.

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."—Matt. xxv, 41.

I.

1. Introduction—Today we are brought to the contemplation of the most terrible and awe-inspiring of the eternal truths—the punishment of the damned in hell. That punishment is foreshadowed in the sentence of the Eternal Judge.

The punishment threefold—the privation of all good: the accumulation of all evil: everlasting torment.

2. The three sorts of goods we are capable of possessing, temporal goods, spiritual goods, and the Eternal Good. Of all these will the damned be deprived in hell. And first of temporal goods.

3. In hell there are no Sacraments, no grace, no Mass, etc. The time for the disbursement of all these spiritual goods has passed forever for the lost souls.

4. The greatest privation of the damned is that of the Eternal Good—a privation which has been styled by theologians "the pain of loss". The unspeakable anguish of the damned at their repulsion by God.

II.

1. In hell the damned shall be afflicted with all kinds of evil; and, first, with the torment of fire. This, the most exquisite of all instruments of torture, specially created by God to avenge sin.

2. This fire is endowed, moreover, with special qualities. It acts immediately on the souls of the damned; it neither consumes them, nor is it itself consumed; hence, it is said of them, "They shall be salted with fire."

3. Not the sense of touch alone, but every sense and every faculty of body and soul, shall have its proper torment; the sight, the hearing, the taste, etc. The spiritual faculties of the mind and will, and the whole being of the reprobate, shall be blasted by the curse of the Almighty. "Get ye gone from Me, ye cursed, into fire."

4. Application and appeal.

The Privation of All Good.

1. The continuation of our series of Lenten sermons brings us today to the contemplation of the most terrible and awe-inspiring of the eternal truths—the punishment of the damned in hell.

And, now, with regard to that punishment, let me premise by saying that just as the nature of the penalty a culprit is about to undergo for a state offense is known from the words of his sentence, so, also, the punishment inflicted on the damned is foreshadowed in the sentence pronounced upon them by the Eternal Judge.

That punishment is of a threefold nature, corresponding to the three members of that dread sentence: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

"Depart from Me, ye cursed"; behold the first punishment of the damned; the privation of all good.

"Into fire"; behold the second punishment; the accumulation of all evil.

"Eternal"; behold the third punishment; torment everlasting.

2. First, then, the damned are deprived of all good. Now, there are three sorts of goods which we are capable of possessing: temporal goods, spiritual goods, and the Eternal Good; and of all these will the damned be deprived in hell.

Of all the temporal goods which a man enjoys in this world, not one will accompany him to the next. "The rich man," says the Book of Job, "when he shall sleep, shall take nothing with him; he shall open his eyes and shall find nothing."

"A certain man was rich," says Our Lord, "who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and he fed sumptu-

ously every day. . . . The rich man died, and he was buried in hell." The wicked rich man had abused his riches. He is now so poor that there remains nothing to him but the remembrance of his riches, of his pleasures, of his past glory. "Son," says Abraham to him, "remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime; and of those things that thou desirest I cannot send thee any; for, there is a great chaos between us." This is the reply that he shall hear for all eternity: "I cannot send thee any"; no, not even a drop of water, which is ready in abundance for the poorest of the poor; "not even a drop of water to cool thy burning tongue."

Behold the state of indigence to which each damned soul will be reduced from the moment of its condemnation. All earthly goods—dignities, honors, pleasures, friends, amusements—it will be deprived of all. By all those it used to offend God; and now it will be justly deprived of all. Nay, all those things that it used on earth as instruments to offend God will now serve God as instruments to punish it.

3. In the second place, the damned are deprived of all spiritual goods. No more grace for the poor lost souls! No more Sacraments! The time of merit and penance is past! They shall never obtain mercy in hell! No longer do the sweet whisperings of the Holy Spirit, inviting to penance and amendment, fall lovingly on the sinner's ears! Those heavenly helps that of old used to come to the soul, soft as the morning's dew, by whose gentle pressure the tide of tears came welling forth, are now withdrawn! No more shall the soul be cleansed by the outpouring of the Blood of Christ in the holy tribunal of Penance! No more shall a banquet of delights be prepared for her in the Holy Com-

munion! The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Immaculate Victim for sin! O soul condemned for sin, does not even the Holy Mass release thee, or at least relieve the agonies of thy state? "Alas," the lost replies, "there is no Redemption in hell!"

"Mine eye," says God by Ezechiel, "Mine eye shall not spare thee; neither will I have pity on thee; but I will lay thy ways upon thee; and thy abominations shall be in the midst of thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord that smite thee."

4. Lastly, the damned are deprived of the Eternal Good; and here it is that in very truth the privation of the reprobate begins. "Depart from Me, ye cursed." This is the greatest and the most terrible of the torments of hell—that which spiritual writers style the "pain or loss." It is that torment by which the soul is deprived forever of that for which it was created.

All things naturally tend to the end for which they were created. And when they are thwarted in the attainment of that end, there is a preternatural straining after it which, in physical nature, is the cause of monsters. "Our hearts were made for Thee, O Lord," says Saint Augustine, "and they can never rest until they rest in Thee." Yes, our souls have an ardent craving for the posession of God, and nothing less than God can satisfy that craving. They were created with a capacity for the possession of the infinite, and nothing less than the enjoyment of the Infinite Good can satisfy their aspirations.

Give a man all the enjoyment that earth can offer. Let him participate in every amusement. Let him taste of every pleasure. Give him the indulgence of every passion; in the end his heart is empty; he hungers for something more.

No man ever indulged himself more in this respect than did Solomon in the days of his fall. No man that ever lived had greater facilities for doing so than he. And at the end, in the emptiness of his heart, he was forced to exclaim: "Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity!" How is this? Why cannot the heart of man be satisfied with the enjoyment of merely natural goods? "Because, Thou hast created us for Thyself, O Lord! and we can never rest until we rest in Thee."

While we are in this world and united to the body to which earthly things are congenial we are not so sensible of this bent of our aspirations. But after death, when the soul is divested of the body, then does it feel with all the force of which an immaterial spirit is capable this straining after the possession of the Infinite. Oh, the anguish unspeakable of the damned who feel at every moment an ineffable longing to be united with God; who are drawn with all the force of their nature to the possession of the Eternal Good, and who at every moment find themselves repulsed by that same God to Whom all their aspirations tend! "Depart from Me, ye cursed"; you are no longer My children. I know you not. You have chosen sin for your portion. You have put on wickedness as a garment. You shall be repudiated by Me for all eternity!

Oh, terrible thought! to be deprived of all Good; but salutary thought for us who have it still in our power to profit by the sad example of the damned.

The Accumulation of All Evil.

1. In hell the damned are loaded with every kind of evil. Now, I do not wish to give any description of hell which Holy Scripture has not given us sanction for. But Holy Scripture lets us know that in hell the

damned will be afflicted with sensible torment—the torment of fire. "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into fire." Into fire! By this we learn that the principal sensible torment of hell is fire. Now, of all the descriptions that could be given of hell none is capable of making a more lively impression on us than to be told that the damned will be tormented by fire. In this world there is no torment to which the human frame can be subjected that equals that of fire. The sword may cut and hack; the body may be bruised and pounded, or torn to pieces by wild beasts. These torments are yet in some way supportable. But let the tip of the finger be subjected for a few moments to the mildest form of fire—the flame of a candle, and an intolerable pain results.

Who then can conceive the torment of the damned when, not the flame of a candle, not the fiercest earthly furnace, but the fire kindled by the wrath of an angry God shall torture them forever?

2. This fire has, moreover, qualities which earthly fires have not, and which were specially given it for the punishment of the wicked. Earthly fires, indeed, affect material substances; but they have no power to hurt immaterial spirits. But the fire of hell, whatever be its nature, has, by the design of God for the torture of the wicked, the power of acting immediately on the souls of the reprobate. Yes, not only the body which naturally is subject to the influence of fire, but even the immaterial soul shall be tormented in these miserable flames.

Another quality of the fire of hell is that it burns without consuming or being itself consumed.

Earthly fires burn and consume their victims, and after a while they are themselves consumed; but the fire of hell is always active, ever renewed. Each moment it receives renewed energy to torture its victims. It

moreover tortures without consuming. It does to the damned what salt does to earthly substances; it preserves them, while it penetrates every part of them; and, hence, Scripture in describing the state of the wicked in hell, says: "They shall be salted with fire."

Yes, for, as salt, in order to preserve the substances on which it acts, must permeate them, so, the fire of hell will permeate and impregnate with its tormenting energy every particle of the bodies, as it will also affect the souls of the damned. The tongue shall burn within the mouth. The brain within the skull shall seethe. The heart within the breast shall beat, instinct with living fire.

3. But fire affects only the sense of touch, and fire is not the only evil with which the wicked shall be afflicted. No, every sense, every faculty of body and soul, shall have its proper torment. The eyes shall be tormented with the lurid darkness of those caverns of despair which the fire will not illuminate. The horrid forms of those monsters of iniquity who formerly had been the curse of earth shall torture the wretched sense of sight. The ears shall be tormented with the horrible curses and imprecations, with the harrowing noises and the spiteful yells of their tormentors. The taste and smell shall be tormented with the fetid taste and loathesome stench of the brimstone and the corruption of their putrefying carcasses. The memory shall be laden with the sad recollection of their past sins. The mind shall reflect on the lost beauty of God Whom it must now never, never see. The will shall be continually attracted to the Eternal Good, and shall forever find itself rejected. Ever shall the words of its condemnation sound like thunder to the soul: "Depart from Me, ye cursed."

4. Oh, ineffable misery of the damned! Who can contemplate those things and dare to commit sin? Reflect on them, you who find yourselves on the high road to perdition by habits of drunkenness, of injustice, of impurity, of sacrilege. Reflect on them, you who conceal your sins in Confession, and who crucify again your God by your unworthy Communions. "Which of you," says Isaias, "can dwell in everlasting fires?" Is it you, O sensual man, who cannot suffer the least inconvenience, but who would have all things according to your will? Is it you, O voluptuous woman, who dream only of taking your ease, and of delivering yourself up to your luxurious appetites? "For the sweet odor in which you now indulge," continues the prophet, "there shall be a stench, and dragon's blood shall be your wine."

Dream, hereafter, only of doing penance for your past sins, that you may escape through God's overpowering mercy, the devouring fires of hell.

SECOND SERMON: FASTING AND MORTIFICATION. A GREAT CHRISTIAN VIRTUE.

1. Introduction—Recapitulation of points of past addresses. Today's sermon to be devoted to a third view of mortification, viz.: as a great virtue which sanctifies and consecrates our bodies to God. As by prayer we offer the sacrifice of our souls to God; so, by fasts and mortifications we make our bodies an agreeable offering to Him. Hence, the appeal of St. Paul to make our bodies a "living sacrifice" to God, "a reasonable service" to Him.

2. Moreover, our bodies being made "the members of Christ," and "the temples of the Holy Ghost," it is just that we adorn them with purity and sanctity. This we do by "crucifying the old man," "by destroying the sinful body," and "by mortifying our members which are upon earth as long as they are in danger of being reduced under the slavery of our present state of corruption."

3. Mortification, lastly, disengages the affections of the soul, and fits her wonderfully for the most sublime flights of prayer and contemplation. Thus it was with the saints, as with Moses, Elias, Daniel, John the Baptist, the fathers of the desert, etc.

4. Appeal, recapitulation of motives, the reward.

1. With the view of making my instructions accord with the spirit of this penitential season, I addressed you on the past two Sundays on the subject of fasting and mortification. And I said, first of all, that bodily mortification is a part of penance enjoined on us by God, by which we satisfy for past sins. And a most efficacious means of expiation of sin it is, as I have shown you, and as the whole history of God's dealings with men testifies. I said, in the second place, that it is a necessary means of strengthening us against the danger of falling into sin, and an important part of the spiritual armor by which to defend ourselves against the enemies of our souls.

Today I come to give you a third view of this practice; and I say that mortification is a great virtue which sanctifies and consecrates our bodies to God. This last view our Lord would have us especially take of it, as we judge from His long fast in the desert. He had no sins to atone for, being the Son of the Most Holy God. He needed not to subdue His flesh, since He was absolute master of His passions, and He was incapable of sin. His fast, then, was an act of consecration of His most holy Body to His Father, and of the most profound submission to His will. We being creatures composed of body and soul and the whole man being designed for beatitude, it is just that the one and the other of these elements be sanctified and that both be made

to serve as holocausts to be burned in homage before Him.

Now, as by prayer we offer the sacrifice of our souls to God, so, by fasts and mortification, we make our bodies an agreeable sacrifice to Him. And, hence, St. Paul conjures us by the tenderest of God's attributes, His mercy, so to dedicate our bodies to Him: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to God, your reasonable service." He calls the sacrifice of the body by mortification "a living sacrifice," in contradistinction to the sacrifice of dead victims such as were offered in the Jewish temple; and again "a reasonable service," to show how much more excellent it is than the sacrifice of irrational creatures, and, consequently, how pure, and holy, and agreeable to God it must be.

2. If our bodies are now made the "members of Christ" and the "temples of the Holy Ghost," as St. Paul tells us they are, with what purity, with what sanctity ought we not to adorn them? And if we have had the misfortune to make them in the past "the instruments of iniquity unto sin," are we not bound the more pressingly now to present them to Him as victims of which we have too long deprived Him, "and as raised from the dead to life now made instruments of righteousness unto God and holiness?" This the apostle exhorts us to do "by all cleanliness of life," as he calls it; by "crucifying the old man" —the natural, sensual man, with his carnal lusts and affections, "by destroying the body of sin;" that is, by macerating the sinful flesh, and by "mortifying our members which are upon earth as long as they

are in danger of being reduced under the slavery of our present state of corruption;" that is to say, during our whole life in this world.

3. Mortification has, moreover, a particular virtue to disengage our hearts from earthly things, and from an inordinate attachment to creatures. Intemperance, we know, and sensual pleasures clog the soul, fetter her affections, and render her altogether earthly and carnal, dulls and stupefies her faculties so as to leave her in a great measure incapable of high spiritual functions. Mortification on the contrary disengages her affections, gives her wings to take her flight above earthly things, and fits her wonderfully for the most sublime flights of prayer and the contemplation of God and heavenly things. See those who were favored with the choicest gifts of heaven how they were prepared for those heavenly visitations. Moses and Elias were both prepared by a fast of forty days to converse with God. Daniel after a fast of three weeks was favored with his highest revelations. And the fathers of the desert by the austerity of their lives were enabled to arrive at the sublime spirit of prayer which made them the wonders of the world.

Read the lives of the saints, they were one and all remarkable for their love of this virtue, and for their fervor in practising it according to their strength and means. Many made their whole life a continual exercise of mortification. How their fervor ought to cover us with confusion and silence our murmurs under slight discomforts. They felt all that man had lost by sin, how frail his strength, that only by weakening the body could the soul

maintain its ascendancy and save both. They knew that mortification loosens the bonds that fetter the soul, and that in return for the short and light tribulations of the body here an eternal weight of recompense shall be in store for it; and they remembered the maxim of Eternal Wisdom which teaches that the edifice of virtue is little better than a ruin if it be not raised on the solid foundation of humility and mortification. "As the grain of wheat, falling into the ground, dies," says our Lord, "before it brings forth fruit; so must we die to ourselves by the mortification of our senses and irregular appetites before we can bring forth the true fruit of virtue.

4. Learn, therefore, my dear brethren, to deny yourselves at all times as a most salutary penance for your past sins. Curb the impetuosity of your passions by the rigid practice of mortification. Deny the body and bring it into subjection, that the soul may govern and become supreme; for by this alone can you securely attain salvation. Practise this virtue at all times, I say, but especially during the holy season we are now passing through as a time specially consecrated to this holy exercise. Thus, denying yourselves, and practising the virtues of Jesus Christ, may you hope to receive hereafter the reward of true penitents.

PASSION SUNDAY.

FIRST SERMON: THE ETERNITY OF HELL.

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."—Matt. xxv, 41.

1. Recapitulation of the punishments of hell treated of in last Sunday's discourse. These not all the evils that the reprobate have to suffer. Their greatest torment comes from the fact that these punishments are eternal.

2. Despair-provoking reflections of the damned. These lead to raging, curses, and blasphemy.

3. Actualization of the torment of the damned. Weighty saying of St. Thomas. These punishments a terror to the saints, as to Saints Bernard and Augustine—actualization of the danger of hell to us all. Cardinal Newman's weighty saying. Famous vision of St. Teresa. Salutary reflection for us all. Heart-searching question to be pondered on. St. Augustine's fear.

4. Conclusion—counsels and warnings of Our Lord.

1. We have already treated of two of the punishments of the damned in hell, namely, the privation of all good, and the accumulation of all evil.

But the privation of God, the Eternal Good, and the accumulation of all evil in the torment of all the faculties of soul and body are not all the evils that the reprobate suffer in hell. No, for holy David in the tenth Psalm says: "Fire and brimstone and storms of winds shall form only a part of their cup of misery." No, for hell is the "treasure-house of the anger of God," as St. Paul says; and in a treasure-house of anger, you know, there are many kinds of instruments of torture. And those, God tells us in another part of Scripture, He will not spare upon His enemies: "I have trampled upon them in My indignation, and have trodden them down in My wrath; for the day of

vengeance is in My heart." All these tortures would be, perhaps, in some way tolerable were there some hope held out to the poor reprobate that their sufferings would one day have an end.

Is there any such hope held out to them, were it to be fulfilled even after millions of ages of torture? "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into fire everlasting." Oh, word, short and simple in its form, but great in its signification! Momentous word that completes the despair of the damned! Have you any conception, dearly beloved, of the dreadful import of this word, eternity, as it regards the poor reprobate in hell?

St. John, in the Apocalypse, describes the angel as crying out with a loud voice and denouncing the chastisements of those who on earth shall have opposed the Lamb, that is, Jesus Christ, in those words: "They shall drink of the wine of God's wrath, and they shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, and the smoke of their torments shall go up for ever and ever; neither shall they have rest either by day or by night."

Yes, my brethren, the smoke of the torments of the damned shall go up for ever and ever. Years shall roll on, ages shall glide away, kingdoms shall rise and fall, but to the damned there is no change—the same curses and blasphemy; the same detestable companions; remorse perpetual corroding their vitals; agony unceasing maddening its victims; hatred relentless against everything holy and venerable; insurrection indomitable against nature and against God. When the sun in the heavens shall have lost its splendor; when the heavens themselves shall have passed away; when the earth, with its span of time embracing myriads of years shall appear but as a speck on the horizon of the memory, eternity shall have but begun its course. And through-

out all those ages, nothing but shame and woe; nothing but remorse and despair; nothing but burnings and agony. "What is eternity as regards the damned?" asks a great French writer. "It is a pendulum, every beat of which repeats in the silence of the tomb those words: 'ever'; 'always'; 'never.'"

2. Dreadful thought, eternal damnation! Agonizing reflection of the reprobate in the midst of his torments. There is a God all glorious for whom I was created, and His face I shall never, never, see. There is a heaven in which my throne was set, and its glory I shall never enjoy. There is a happiness for which I was ordained, and its sweets I shall never taste. Never; never; always; always! Never mercy; never light; never hope; never pardon! Always in tears; always in sorrow; always in suffering; always in despair! My body pained; my soul tortured; my brain racked; and all this never to have an end! Oh, eternity; eternity!

At this thought the poor reprobate, abandoned by God; disappointed in every hope; without remedy; without resource; gives himself up to the horrors of despair, and in his rage he tries to destroy himself and tear himself to pieces. And since he cannot, he breaks out into incontrollable rage and fury. He opens his mouth in blasphemy against the Most High, and from his burning throat flings curses on all things sacred and profane. Cursed be the fate that has doomed me to those flames, and the sins that were the cause of my damnation! Why was I created? Cursed be the day I was born! Why did my mother bear me, and why did that day see the light on which I came into the world? Cursed be the companions that led me into sin! Why did not the world perish before I offended the Almighty? Must

I then be tormented for ever in these flames? Revengeful God, do Thy worst; burn me yet more and more! I care not for Thee! Heap, if Thou wilt, still greater torments on my head! Ah, wo is me! Burning for endless ages; never to be released; never to see the face of God; melancholy everlasting; never-ending anguish and despair!

3. These things are terrible to hear, dear brethren. How terrible to experience them in hell! To suffer for all eternity! To suffer every moment of eternity! To suffer each moment the torture of an eternity! With reason, indeed, does the great doctor, St. Thomas of Aquin, say, that he could not conceive how it could be that Christians believe in the existence of hell, and yet offend God by mortal sin.

How the saints feared the punishment of hell! "I tremble all over," says St. Bernard, "at the thought of that region, and all my bones are troubled." And St. Augustine, at the thought of hell, begs of God to torture him with any punishment in this world, provided that He saved him from the torture of hell hereafter. "Here burn!" says he, "here cut! here spare not! provided Thou spare me for eternity!"

Are we affected at the thought of hell? If not, our case is only a little less pitiable than that of the unhappy damned. "He who is not stricken with fear at the noise of such a thunder," says St. Augustine, "does not slumber, he is not asleep, he is already dead."

Can such a fate as to form one of the unhappy company of the damned be awaiting any of us? Oh! away with the dreadful thought that would sadden the remainder of our lives!

But, my brethren, a great thinker of our age and a

holy man, the late Cardinal Newman, has said, that "you can scarcely cast your eyes down the crowded street that they will not fall on many men and women who will be one day amongst the damned." St. Teresa saw in a vision the souls of men fall like snowflakes into the mouth of hell.

Pay attention to this which I am going to say. There are tens of thousands who this time yesterday were as full of life and worldly hopes as we are, and who enjoyed the good things of the world as we do, and who have already commenced their eternity of punishment in hell!

Shall I, then, Oh, can I put the question? Do I see at this moment, in this temple of the living God, among those who worship before the throne of Jesus Christ, one, anyone, many, who are destined to suffer hereafter in hell? I do not know, my brethren, nor yet can I give you any assurance that it will not be so. I can only answer in the words of St. Augustine: "I am terrified with fear; I would bid you banish all fear if I myself felt secure, but I tremble at the thought of hell."

Yes, we may join in religious worship with the saints of God, but that will not make us secure. There was a Judas who spent three years in the company of Jesus Christ. He saw His many miracles. He received the special attention of the Master. He afterwards betrayed Him into the hands of His enemies, and that very night he got a rope and hanged himself in despair, and was damned!

4. All I can do then is to point out to you the secure way to avoid hell as it is shown us by our Divine Lord Himself. "With fear and trembling work out your salvation." "Watch and pray, that ye enter not

into temptation." "Enter ye in by the narrow gate" of the observance of God's Commandments: "for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are that go in thereat. But how narrow is the gate and straight the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that find it."

SECOND SERMON: CONFESSION.

"If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity."—John I, 1, 9.

1. Introduction—Eulogy of Confession as a remedy for the maladies of our souls. In order that we may experience the effects of this remedy we must employ it rightly. The method of employing it rightly, the purpose of this instruction, and of others to follow.

2. Confession must be sorrowful; it must be entire. The first condition treated of in the instruction on Contrition. 1st Vol., p. 199. This instruction is devoted to the explanation of the second condition.

What the integrity of Confession means. This condition required from the fact of the priest's having been created a judge of souls. The penitent must then act the part of accuser and witness against himself, therefore, he must make an entire statement of his case to the confessor in order that he may receive a just sentence of remission.

3. The Confession to be a faithful manifestation of our known mortal sins, such as we see them in our consciences. Conscience testifies to our sins as to their species; and as to their number. The character of sins drawn from their opposition to the different virtues, or to the different Commandments. Such as is their different character, they constitute different species of sin. There may be many different species of sin against any one Commandment or against any single virtue. On each of these species of sin must the confessor give judgment; each species must be clearly declared to the priest to answer to the requirements of the Divine law of Confession.

Again, the number of sins must be told. Each mortal sin, an act of distinct malice against God.

We must then tell as exactly as we can the number of times

we have been guilty of those distinct acts of malice, i. e., those species of sin.

4. Two classes of penitents fail in this matter of the integrity of Confession. First: the careless class who come to confession unprepared and indisposed. Their confessions are very often invalid, if not sacrilegious, and as such are an outrage against God and a curse to themselves.

Second: Weaklings who conceal their sins through false shame or fear. Appeal against the commission of such an outrage against God and such a profanation of the Sacrament. Qualities of the confessor—a man, a Christian, a priest, a spiritual father.

5. Counsel. Encouraging example of the penitent David. Beneficial results of a contrite and humble Confession.

1. If there came into town a man who promised the secret of curing the most dangerous and long-standing maladies not only at little cost but even without any expense at all, and who engaged himself moreover to enrich those to whom he had procured health; if he gave assured proofs of what he advanced, how would not people regard so extraordinary a physician? with what eagerness would they not come to him from every quarter? with what praises and blessings would they not load him?

I come today to teach you a remedy which infallibly cures the deepest wounds, the most envenomed ulcers, the most dangerous maladies of souls and that without any expense. It costs only a few tears, a few sighs. This is not all. It loads with spiritual goods and enriches for eternity those who receive it. This great remedy is Sacramental Confession.

But in order that we may experience the effects of this admirable remedy we must employ it rightly—and this is what I want to teach you in the instruction I purpose giving you today, and in others that are to follow.

You all know what Confession is. There is no prac-

tice better known, or, I dare say, more consoling to the Christian. There is nothing better known in the Church than the practice of Confession; but I regret I must add, there is at the same time nothing worse known than the manner of making it well. Just as we find in the world people who pass all their lives in certain states, and yet who can never succeed whether through indolence or dullness in discharging properly the duties of those states—just as we find laboring men, for instance, who can never execute properly the directions of their masters; just as we find tradesmen who can never finish properly the work they have on hands; just as we find housekeepers who can never manage to keep dirt and disorder from their homes; so, there is nothing more common than to meet with people who go frequently to Confession, and, yet, who can never execute properly the commands of Jesus Christ in regard to Confession; who never put themselves to the trouble or preparing properly for it; who can never rid their souls of the dirt and disorder of mortal sin.

2. Now, Confession, to be good and efficacious, must have two grand conditions: it must be sorrowful, and it must be entire. It must be sorrowful; in other words, we must bring to Confession true sentiments of sorrow for our sins. This condition I explained when treating of contrition. (See first Vol., p. 199.) Let me devote myself today to the explanation of the second.

Our Confession must be entire. Now, when I say that our Confession must be entire, I mean that it must embrace all mortal sins committed since Baptism and not already validly confessed, which we can call to memory after a careful examination of conscience.

I pray you, pay attention to this declaration: Our

Confession, to be entire, must embrace all mortal sins committed after Baptism and not already validly confessed—it must embrace all such sins that we can call to memory after a careful examination of conscience. This is a condition that is required of us from the very nature of the Sacrament of Penance; for, when our Lord gave power to the apostles to forgive sins He endowed them with judicial authority; that is to say, He constituted them judges of souls. Now, this being so, how are confessors to exercise their office of judges if the sins of their penitents be not made known to them in their entirety? They cannot pronounce sentence on those penitents without having first submitted to them the nature of their sins and the amount of their guilt; therefore, must the penitent act the part of accuser and witness against himself. Therefore, is it his bounden duty to make an entire and faithful declaration of his sins to the confessor.

Neither is there any other way open to sinners to get pardon of their sins. For, if there were, they would naturally shirk the painful and humiliating ordeal of Confession, and thus the Sacrament of Penance would become useless and illusory for the greater part of those for whom it was instituted.

3. Our Confession must be entire. Now, that our Confession be entire it must be a faithful manifestation of our known mortal sins, such as after a careful examination we see them in our consciences. "*Quorum sunt in consciencia*" (*Rit. Rom.*) This is an important point and one on which a great many deceive themselves, alas, to the profanation of the Sacrament, and to their own spiritual ruin. How many go to Confession and who fail to declare the sins of which they are conscious?

Through self-love and want of humility, they cloak their sins, they palliate them, the things that are hard to tell they either conceal entirely, or they tell them in such a way as to mystify the confessor, and thus this salutary Sacrament becomes for them a curse rather than a blessing; since they receive it only to profane it.

Sins are to be told such as we see them in our consciences. Now, our consciences, being true witnesses of our guilt, give testimony in two ways, namely, as to the species of our sins, and as to their number; that is, as to the kinds of sins we have fallen into, and as to the number of times we have fallen into each kind of sin.

First, as to the species: It cannot be unknown to you that sins differ in their character. This difference arises from their opposition to different virtues, or to different Commandments. Well, such as is their different character, which arises, as I have said, from their opposition to different virtues or to different precepts, they constitute different species of sin. Thus, a sin of injustice is different from a sin of anger; a sin of disobedience is different from a sin of infidelity; a sin of lying is different from a sin of intemperance, and so of others. Nay, there may be many species of sin committed against any one Commandment or against any single virtue. Thus, for instance, with regard to the Sixth Commandment, there are sins of thought, of desire; sins committed by one's self; sins committed in complicity with others; together with subdivisions of those sins according to the quality of those others or of ourselves; subdivisions, moreover, of sins of desire corresponding to external actions.

See, my friends, how many different species of sin

may come under the one heading, and yet on each of these species must the confessor give judgment. Each of those species of sin, then, that we are guilty of must be clearly declared to the priest, though in becoming language, to answer to the requirements of the Divine law of Confession, as expounded in the decrees of the Council of Trent.

Again, the number of sins must be told in Confession —and this is a point I wish particularly to direct your attention to; for, alas, many come to Confession who examine themselves not at all as to the number of their sins. Those expose themselves to the danger of making their confessions invalid, since this is of strict requirement in the Sacrament. Every mortal sin is an act of distinct malice against God. It makes a great difference, therefore, to say whether that act has been committed one, two, or ten times, in the acknowledgment that must be made of it to God's representative to whom we apply for pardon. It will not do, then, to give merely the species of sin; we must tell as exactly as we can the number of times we have been guilty of each particular species of sin.

4. Two classes of penitents fail in this matter of the integrity of Confession; first, careless Christians. There are those who come to Confession without serious thought as to the action they are going to perform—without preparation, without prayer, without the dispositions which so serious, so awful an action demands, and who leave it to the priest to make up for their neglect by an arduous and unsatisfactory labor of instruction, exhortation, and questioning.

What is to be said of such penitents? Why, that their confessions are very often bad and invalid, if not

sacrilegious; that their action is a profanation of the Sacrament; that they are often guilty of trampling on the Blood of Jesus Christ, and by so doing they drink deep of the cup of their damnation in that which ought to be for them the saving waters of eternal life.

Then, there is another class who fail in this matter of integrity, a numerous class, I fear, and they are those who know right well the species and number of their sins, but who are afraid to confess them, or who depend on the priest to drag them out of the lurking holes of their consciences. They have committed sins—shameful sins—which they now fear to make known to their confessor, and which they allow to remain and luxuriate sometimes for months and years in their souls.

Well, poor deluded ones, if any such be listening to me, what can we do but pity and compassionate you? O dear brother or sister, I beg of you to reflect on what you do, and on the greatness of the sacrilege you commit by your unworthy confession. You abuse the gift of God; you trample on the Blood of Jesus Christ; you profane the Sacrament that was destined to justify you; you call down on yourself the swift vengeance of the Almighty. Reflect that it is to God you confess. The priest is only His representative. You ought, then, to accuse yourself with as much fidelity as if you saw our Lord Himself sitting in the tribunal of Penance to hear you. If you conceal your sins, if you disguise them, fear lest that be said to you which was said to Ananias as he fell dead at Saint Peter's feet: "It is not to man, but to God, to the God of truth that you tell a lie."

And tell me what it is you are afraid of, and of whom? Consider who the priest is to whose feet you

come to confess your sins. He is man; he is a Christian; he is a priest. He is a man. He knows human frailty. He experiences it in himself every day. He is faulty, weak, subject to temptations like yourself. Perhaps he committed before now sins as bad as those which you have to tell him; and if he did not, he would have committed them if God by His grace had not preserved him from committing them.

He is a Christian, a child of the same Church as you. When you make known to him a sin that you would not for worlds make known to another, don't you show him the greatest mark of confidence? He should have the heart of a tiger, then, if he had not charity and commiseration for you, though he might seem to be stern with you.

He is a priest of God, and, therefore, he rejoices at your conversion. The angels in heaven, we know, rejoice at the conversion of a sinner. Why not then your confessor rejoice when he sees you come to confess to him, and when he feels thereby that his ministry is made fruitful in the Church?

Finally, he is your spiritual father. You yourself give him that tender and loving name; hence, you ought to have entire confidence in him.

5. Confess your sins, then, dearly beloved, with fidelity, and in their integrity. Say with the Royal Prophet: "I will confess against myself my iniquity before the Lord." He says "against myself" to show that he did not plead in his own cause to avoid the correction that he deserved. He continues, "before the Lord." Now, what one does "for the Lord" or "before the Lord," he must do faithfully, lest he merit the curse pronounced by the Wise Man against those who do the

work of the Lord negligently. If you so confess your sins, you can say after Confession what the prophet adds: and "You, O Lord, have pardoned me the malice of my sins." God will grant you grace and mercy, and will put you in the way that leads to salvation.

PALM SUNDAY.

FIRST SERMON: DEVOTION TO THE PASSION.

I.

1. Introduction—Attention was called in a former discourse to the remarkable devotion offered by the Church to the Passion and death of Jesus Christ. This feeling would seem to be intensified as we approach nearer to Holy Week.

2. Devotion to the Passion contributes most efficaciously to our spiritual well-being, since, first, it turns us away from sin. The brazen serpent lifted up in the desert a striking figure of Jesus Christ crucified. Our Lord's own interpretation of the figure.

3. The consideration of a God suffering for us, and of the virtues exemplified in the Passion, a remedy against every vice—e. g., impurity, avarice, pride, anger, etc. Application. The prophecy of Zachary, "I will pour out upon the house of David," etc., fulfilled at the Passion. The meditation on the Passion will produce a like result upon us. Our occupation then ought to be to ask for mercy with the Magdalen at the foot of the Cross.

II.

1. Meditation on the Passion urges us, in the second place, to the practice of virtue, and this as well by the sublime example of virtue given us by our Saviour in His sufferings, as by the grace following from such an occupation.

As to the former, it is the highest put before us, even by our Lord! And as to the latter, it corresponds to the closeness to which we approach that which is the source of all grace—the Passion. This is intimated to us by our Lord: "When I shall be lifted up I shall draw all things to Myself." St. Leo's sublime apostrophe. The contemplation of Jesus' suffering teaches us to despise the things of this world; to brave affronts, persecutions, and death; to bear suffering with patience and in union with those of Jesus Christ.

2. Misery of the world, that scarcely anyone ponders on the Passion. The ingratitude of men to our Lord Who, even in the agony of death, was occupied only with the thought of our good.

3. Appeal. Comment on St. Peter's exhortation. St. Paul's grand testimony. The reward.

I.

1. In a discourse delivered some time ago* I commented on the remarkable devotion exhibited by the Church towards the Passion and death of our blessed Lord. And in doing so I called attention to the many ways in which the devotion is expressed. This feeling would seem to be intensified as the Lenten season advances and as we approach nearer to the "Great Week" commemorative of the tragedy of Calvary. Hence do we meet with in the sacred liturgy a more frequent and plaintive reference to the sufferings of the Saviour.

At this season, too, our altars are stripped, our sacred images veiled, our churches draped in mourning colors, and all things in church worship tend to turn our thoughts towards the mystery of the Cross.

This is why I venture once again to address you on the subject of devotion to the Passion.

2. And I say that this devotion is one that contributes most effectually to our spiritual well-being. That it does so is shown from this, that it is the most efficacious means, first, to turn us away from sin, and, second, to urge us to the practice of virtue.

We read in Scripture that when the Israelites were passing through the desert, the greater number murmured against God. And God, to punish them, sent amongst them fiery serpents, that is, serpents whose bite burned like fire.

This plague caused such desolation among the people that the most seditious changed their murmurs into prayers and tears. They came before Moses and begged him to have pity on them and to stop

*See 1st vol., p. 220.

the plague. Moses humbly carried their petitions before God Who allowing Himself to be softened by the prayers of this holy man commanded him to make a brazen serpent, and to set it for a sign on the top of a standard, at the same time assuring him that those who being bitten would look upon it would be cured—as afterwards happened.

It is not the interpreters of Scripture: it is Jesus Christ Himself Who has explained of Himself and of His Cross this excellent figure, which had been a visible prophecy of it 1,500 years before His death. "As Moses," says He, "lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting." "What is the uplifted serpent?" asks St. Augustine. "It is Jesus Christ dead, and lifted on the Cross." As then those who looked upon the brazen serpent lifted up in the desert were cured of the poisoned bite of the serpents; so those who with faith and piety look upon Jesus lifted on the Cross will be cured of the bite of the infernal serpent and of the deadly wound of sin.

3. In truth, there is no vice for which we do not find a remedy in the consideration of a God suffering for us. What impurity that will not be cured by the contemplation of the cruel scourging which this Man-God, become "a Man of sorrows," has suffered to expiate our sensuality? What avarice that will not be cured by the reflecting on the extreme poverty of the Son of God dying naked on the Cross? What pride that will not be cured by the sight of the infinite patience of the Saviour keeping silence when He is charged with injuries, and when He is unjustly condemned to death? What desire of revenge that

will not be cured by the charity of the Saviour praying for His executioners and asking pardon of His Father for those who unjustly condemned Him to death? "Father," He says, "forgive them." No, dearly beloved, there is no remedy like this to quell our passions, and to cure us of the wound of sin.

My brethren, you complain of the strength of your temptations and of the difficulties of avoiding sin. Here, then, is your remedy. For, had you a heart of stone, meditation on the death of Jesus Christ is capable of softening it. Your hearts are surely not more obdurate than were those of the Jews. Behold, then, what says the prophet, Zachary: "I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of prayer. And they shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced. And they shall mourn over Me as one mourneth for an only son, and they shall grieve for Me, as the manner is to grieve for the death of the first-born."

This prophecy was fulfilled in regard to the Jews who were converted on the day of Pentecost. At the preaching of St. Peter they reflected on the Deicide they were guilty of, and did penance. Why will not meditation on the Passion have the same effect on you? You are not less guilty than they. You have crucified Jesus Christ anew by your sins. Let your occupation be, then, to beg for mercy at the feet of the Crucifix. Let your place be before the Cross with Mary, the sinner, let us say, rather, with Mary, the penitent, in order that, stained with the Blood of the Redemption, you may be cured of the wound of sin.

II.

1. But this holy exercise not only withdraws us from sin, it, moreover, leads us to the practice of virtue. And this it does as well by the sublime example given us by our Saviour in the Passion, as from the grace and efficacy following from such an occupation. As to the example, it is the highest put before us even in the life of Jesus Christ. All virtue culminates in the Passion and death of the Saviour, and as to the grace and efficacy, they correspond to the closeness to which we approach that which is the source of all supernatural grace—the Passion. This is why the Saviour, speaking of his death, says: "When I shall be lifted up I shall draw all things to Myself."

"Yes, Lord," we may cry out with St. Leo, "You have drawn all things to Yourself by Your death. You have drawn Jew and Gentile, Greek and Barbarian, the learned and the simple. You have drawn by Your Cross the nations to the knowledge of the Gospel, and the hearts of men to the love of virtue. You have drawn all things to Yourself."

It is from the height of the Cross, as from a pulpit, that You exhort us all to become saints, and we learn in contemplating You there, all that we have to do in order to become saints. We there learn to despise the things of the world; for, if they deserved to be loved, the Son of God, Who was made Man for our sakes, would, without doubt, have loved them. We there learn not to fear affronts, persecutions, or death itself; for, if all these things were hurtful to man, the Son of God, Who was made Man for love of us, would not have suffered them. In a word,

there is no virtue which the Cross of Christ does not preach to us.

Where is the poor, the sick, or the afflicted man who will dare to complain if he compares his evils to those which the Saviour has suffered? He will see that, although he may have suffered much, he has still a long way to go before he arrives at sufferings like those of Jesus Christ. Where are the whips, the spittle, the vinegar, the gall, the crown of thorns, the outrages, the nails, the Cross? Where is the Christian who thinks of all this and who does not find himself still far removed from this Divine Model? Every other sorrow would disappear in the presence of the Cross, if men had this object as present in their mind as they ought to have.

2. But the evil of it is that scarcely anyone reflects on it. "With desolation is the whole land made desolate, because there is no one who thinketh in the heart." Is it not the greatest ingratitude, the forgetfulness in which we live of all that Jesus Christ has suffered for us? O brethren, it was for us that He was crucified, and in the midst of the agonies of death He was occupied only with the thought of our good. And, yet, who thinks of this? Who occupies himself with this thought, and who makes of it the subject of his ordinary meditations? "Behold, the Just One dies and there is no one who thinketh in his heart."

3. My brethren, let us not carry our ingratitude so far. Rather, let us reflect unceasingly on a God crucified for love of us.

This is the exhortation to us of the prince of the Apostles. In the fourth chapter of his first epistle

he says: "Christ, therefore, having suffered in the flesh, be you also armed with the same thought." (Pet. I, iv, 1.) Yes, be you armed with this thought at all times and in all conjunctures: at work and in repose; at rising up and retiring; at walking on your way and remaining in your homes. Make of it an arm of offense and defense in the spiritual warfare. Never lose sight of the sufferings of Jesus Christ. Oh, happy, thrice happy, those who, living in the faith of the Son of God, occupy themselves continually with this thought: "I live in the faith of Jesus Christ Who loved me and Who delivered Himself to death for me."

But if the distractions and necessities of life permit you not to employ all the time that you would desire in this holy exercise, spend at least a short time each day in it if only by telling the sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary. If you do so, I dare to assure you that this short time, being well employed, will suffice to make you faithful associates of the Passion of the Saviour, and to merit for you the grace of being one day associates of His Glory.

SECOND SERMON: BAD CONFESSION.

1. Introduction. Just as medicine administered to one indisposed for its reception injures the patient instead of curing him, so, penance, the great remedy of sick souls, received without due dispositions, instead of curing the penitent, plunges him into a deeper abyss of evil.

The discourse today on the folly of those who conceal their sins in confession.

2. That folly is indeed prodigious, since their act deprives them of inestimable goods, and procures for them frightful evils. These goods and these evils recounted.

3. Fear the cause of the greater part of sacrilegious con-

fessions. This fear may be expressed under the four following heads: fear of losing the esteem of the confessor; fear of reproof; fear of humiliating penances; fear of refusal of absolution.

4. Fear from these sources shown to be futile.

5. The conditions of pardon in Penance most easy.

Rebuke to parents and others who would form hasty judgments concerning the state of soul of those who don't go to Communion after Confession.

6. Exhortation to candor in Confession. This candor absolutely necessary.

The joy and peace of soul felt after a sincere confession; other advantages of same.

1. It is an incontestable truth that the best medicines if they be administered to a patient who is badly disposed for them, often prove the most dangerous, and throw the poor sufferer into a state almost beyond the reach of recovery.

The Sacrament of Penance is as we have seen the great remedy of sick souls. But if a penitent have the misfortune to receive it without due dispositions, instead of curing him of his spiritual maladies, it aggravates them; instead of rescuing him out of the abyss into which his sins had cast him, it plunges him into a still deeper one, and only too often leaves him in a state entirely desperate.

It is in order to incite you to use all your efforts that you may approach the holy tribunal of Penance with the dispositions that God demands of you, and at the same time to leave nothing undone to repair past failings on this head, that I come to address you again today on the Sacrament of Penance, and in particular I wish to show you the folly of those who conceal or who disguise their sins in confession.

2. The blindness of those who conceal or who disguise their sins in confession is indeed prodigious, and

in some way unaccountable. What, in fact, more unaccountable than to see reasonable people deprive themselves of many inestimable goods, and procure for themselves frightful evils through pure omission, and without knowing almost the reason why? They deprive themselves of all the advantages of the Sacrament of Penance, which are very considerable; they deprive themselves of sanctifying grace, of the friendship of God, of the gifts and of the presence of the Holy Ghost, of the restitution of all their past good works whose merits had been suspended by their sins; and, at the same time, they cast themselves into a frightful state of danger and despair. They profane the Blood of Jesus Christ by receiving a sacrilegious absolution. From this they proceed to trample under foot His Adorable Body by communicating unworthily. They condemn themselves to cruel remorse during life, and to frightful despair on the bed of death; and, finally, to suffer for eternity the punishment of hell. And all this for what? To avoid a slight confusion, the outcome of self-love, and through yielding to a vain and frivolous fear.

3. Now, as fear, coming from one source or another, is the cause of the greater part of the sacrilegious confessions that people make, let me try to show you how foolish it is, and how great the folly of those who allow it to restrain them from a full and candid declaration of their sins. This fear, indefinite as a rule, and induced in the soul by the father of lies, may be expressed under the four following heads: the fear of the loss of esteem of the confessor as a result of confessing to him certain humiliating sins; the fear of reproof; the fear of

hard and humiliating penances; and the fear of refusal or delay of absolution.

4. And do you imagine, in the first place, dear brother or sister, that you will lose the esteem of your confessor by a humble and candid confession of your sins? You deceive yourself. Up to this he could have ground for suspecting that you were only a hypocrite, because he knows right well that it is only too common to find people who conceal their sins in confession. But when he will see that you declare with sincerity your sins, shameful and humiliating as they may be, he will judge that you are in good dispositions, and will esteem you the more for it.

I remember once having been in conversation with a venerable bishop, one who exercised a greater influence over souls, perhaps, than any other ecclesiastic of his time and country, and in speaking on this subject he said: "I assure you no matter how great may have been the sins a penitent confesses to me, I can see nothing in the bowed and contrite figure at my feet but the lovely soul just cleansed by the Blood of Jesus Christ, and by the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity; and I myself bow down and worship God Who has set up His throne in that soul justified by the absolution I gave him." And this simply expresses the sentiment of every enlightened priest towards the penitent whom he has absolved. For, how can he condemn him whom Jesus Christ esteems, or how look on him as unclean who has been cleansed by the same Saviour through the merit of Whose death he himself was redeemed?

Lay aside, therefore, dearly beloved, all fears coming from this head, and believe what is most true,

that your confessor has for you an esteem which no one else can have, since no one else can know as he does the infinite worth of the soul just now enriched with the precious treasures of grace received in the Sacrament of Penance.

2. Are you afraid that he will reprove you for your sins, or that he will load you with penances, or that he will refuse you absolution? But be well persuaded to the contrary. He will take good care not to complain. Instead of making use of harsh and severe words he will treat you with all sweetness possible. He will compassionate your weakness. He will help you to declare your sins. He will avail himself of all his experience and knowledge and all his industry to draw out of your conscience that winding serpent that bites you and poisons your whole being, if you on your part make the necessary advance, and give him the opportunity to aid you in your happy delivery. And when you shall have confessed your sins what joy will you not have and peace of soul in compensation for the little shame in confessing them? You will bless the Lord a thousand times for having given you courage and strength to declare them, and you will be surprised at your former weakness seeing that your ground for fear was so imaginary.

3. As to the rigor of the penances you imagine you are going to receive, disabuse yourself of that fear. Your confessor will treat you with prudence, and will appoint for you only satisfactions proportionate to your power and the wants of your soul.

4. Lastly, as regards the refusal of absolution, he will act solely for the good of your soul. What! would you have him make you commit a sacrilege by

giving you absolution with your soul unprepared? If then he judges it proper to defer absolution for a time, this will be solely in order that you may prepare with greater care, and that you may find in the Sacrament of Reconciliation the life and not the death of your soul. You see then, my dear brethren, how great is the folly of those who conceal their sins in confession, and how frivolous are the excuses they give to diminish the enormity of a conduct so outrageous and so unreasonable.

5. But may we not say here to those who conceal their sins in confession what the servants of Naaman said to their master when he came to the prophet Elisaeus to get cured of his leprosy? He was a Syrian nobleman, and when he came to be cured by the prophet the man of God bade him go and bathe seven times in the Jordan and he would be cured. He indignantly refused to do so, saying: "Are not the Abana and the Pharphar rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel, that I may wash in them and be made clean?" But his servants came to him and said to him: "Father, if the prophet had bid thee to do some great thing, surely thou shouldst have done it; how much rather what he now hath said to thee, 'Wash and thou shalt be clean?'"

If God commanded you, my dear brother or sister, to go and publish through the country the most secret and shameful sins of your conscience under penalty of the loss of Heaven and of being damned forever, ought you hesitate a moment to do it? On the contrary, he contents Himself with demanding from you that you declare your sins in secret, to a single man, to a man who is obliged by every law

human and divine to keep them an inviolable secret. He gives you permission when you are afraid of one confessor to go to another; to go and seek him as far away as you please; to choose one who does not know you; nor does He oblige you to confess your sins except once in your life.

And here let me give a few words of advice to parents and others who follow inquisitively the conduct of their children and neighbors in regard to their confession. Don't be too hasty in forming judgments as to their conduct, first, in not going to the Altar on the morning after confession; second, in going to strange priests; and, third, in going frequently.

Many don't wish to receive Communion till after they have gone a second time to confession. Many find greater confidence in the direction of one confessor than in that of another. There are people of very delicate consciences and who have at the same time great respect for the Sacrament. It is tyranny to interfere with souls in delicate matters of conscience of this sort. And if our blessed Lord has given the greatest liberty to souls in regard to their confessions and to those to whom they shall confess, how will unauthorized and uninformed outsiders dare to interfere with that liberty?

6. Confess your sins, then, sincerely and candidly to your confessor, and be not held back from doing so by any vain fear. Know for certain, in the first place, that there is no other means of obtaining the pardon you seek, and without it your eternal ruin is assured. Yes, were you to give all your goods to feed the poor; were you to practise the greatest austerities throughout life; were you to convert as many

souls as the apostles; were you to suffer the most frightful torments for the faith, without a faithful and candid confession of your sins when in your power, there is no pardon to be hoped for, and you are as certain of going to hell as if you were already there, because God wishes to be obeyed, and He counts as nothing all the rest that you can do. What is more terrible still in this cursed silence is that all the absolutions you receive in this state, all the Communions you receive, are so many sacrileges.

Know, moreover, that unless you do so you will be torn night and day with an uneasiness and remorse which will make life for you an anticipated hell. Nor is this all: at death a frightful despair will overwhelm you, and you will die in uncontrollable rage and terror, according to that saying of the Wise Man: "He that conceals his sins shall come by a bad end." Nay, if you conceal your sins now from God's authorized representative, He will reveal them on the great day of His Judgments in the sight of heaven and earth; He will make them known to your relatives, and friends, and neighbors; to all men and angels.

But even this is not all. These concealed sins will go down with you to hell where they will devour you forever. They will be so many monsters dangling their hideous forms before your eyes and making more frightful still your eternity of pain and woe.

Go, then, I say, in God's name, you who feel your consciences burdened with a load of concealed sins. Throw yourselves at the feet of a wise and discreet confessor. Open to him entirely your heart with all its weaknesses and evil inclinations. Taste and see

how sweet the Lord is amid the humiliations of a sincere confession. You will find in it an inconceivable peace and joy, and God will make you feel in the depths of your heart the truth of the words of Scripture, "He who shall declare his sins humbly shall find mercy." God will, as He says, "cast them into the depths of the sea." He will hide them in an eternal oblivion, never again to trouble the peace of your soul, or to interfere with your happiness in this world or in the next.

EASTER SUNDAY.

THE RESURRECTION.

"And when the Sabbath was past Mary Magdalen and Mary the mother of James and Salomé brought sweet spices, that coming they might anoint Jesus. And very early in the morning the first day of the week they came to the sepulchre, the sun being now risen, and they said to one another: 'Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre?' And looking they saw the stone rolled back; for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre they saw a young man sitting on the right side clothed with a white robe; and they were astonished. Who saith to them: 'Be not affrighted. You seek Jesus of Nazareth Who was crucified. He is risen. He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee; there you shall see Him as He told you.'"—Mark xvi, 1-7.

I.

1. Before Jesus Christ the tomb was always looked upon as the fatal rock on which was wont to split and perish all human greatness. In vain had the great ones of the world tried in some sort to achieve a semblance of immortality by raising over their remains costly mausoleums and by engraving on them the record of their former titles and exploits. All these trivial embellishments only served the more to enhance the triumph of death over all human endeavor.

2. But where human greatness meets with its overthrow, that of Jesus Christ begins to be the more solidly established. This is seen from the words of the angel at the sepulchre: "He is not here; He is arisen. Why seek ye the living among the dead?" In His case alone was fulfilled the prophecy spoken ages before, that the Messias would have "a glorious sepulchre."

A glorious sepulchre is one out of which the interred has arisen and that by his own power. This fact alone of the Resurrection was considered by the Prince of the Apostles sufficient to prove His Divinity. Glorification of His unique triumph.

II.

1. It is not enough for us to glory with the Saviour in His Resurrection; we must take part also in His triumph; and this we are to do by ourselves arising to a life of grace and Christian perfection. This we can do by the help of grace; and this

is what should engage our attention, especially on this great solemnity.

2. As there are false resurrections from the dead, such as that we read of when the witch of Endor called the ghost of Samuel from the tomb, so there are false resurrections from the grave of sin, such as take place when the penitent retains an affection for sin and refuses to give up evil associations.

3. There is a second kind of resurrection spoken of in Scripture, a true, a genuine one, it is true, but a temporary and imperfect one. Such was that which took place with those who were raised from the dead by our Lord and the saints. They all died again. There is also in the spiritual life a temporary and imperfect resurrection from sin. This occurs to those who after their conversion neglect prayer, neglect the mortification of their passions, above all, who imprudently place themselves in the occasions of sin.

4. We must model our resurrection to a life of grace and Christian perfection on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, by leading a life of prayer, by frequenting Holy Communion, and by the daily practice of the Christian virtues.

I.

1. Before Jesus Christ the tomb was always looked upon as the fatal rock on which was wont to split and perish all human greatness. Death had triumphed over all, and no man had yet been found upon the earth who did not end his career by being made the prey of this devouring monster, who swallowed up all and disgorged none.

In vain had the great ones of the world tried in some sort to survive their own discomfiture. They chose even to combat death on the very field of his fame and the place of his triumph, by raising to themselves costly mausoleums which had no other foundation than the nothingness of their dust. In vain had they tried to render at least their sepulchres glorious by engraving on them in marble and brass the titles of a nobility which once was theirs.

All these garnishments served only to render their tombs the more brilliant trophies of the conqueror, Death, and monuments the more illustrious of their overthrow. The bare inscription written on their tombs is proof of this. The first two words will tell you all; you need go no further. The rest may perhaps tell you what they had been; but these alone will tell you what they are. "Here lieth," they will say; "here lieth this man, great according to the world, but little in the eyes of God, who, having been lifted up with pride and ambition like the waves of the sea, is finally come to dash himself in impotence against the dust of this tomb."

Here he lies, that famous conqueror who had astonished the world with the fame of his exploits. The earth which he held captive under his laws was silent in his presence. But behold him in the end a captive in the dark prison-house of death where he is himself condemned to a silence everlasting.

2. But where human greatness meets with its overthrow that of Jesus Christ begins to be the more solidly established. The angels today engrave on His tomb an epitaph very different indeed to that engraved on the tombs of men. "He is not here," they say, "He has arisen! Why seek ye the living among the dead?" . . .

The prophet foretold that the Messias would display for the first time in the world's history "a glorious sepulchre." A glorious sepulchre is not one in which the dead is enclosed. It is one wherein he is enclosed no longer, and from which he has come forth by the power of his own arm. And this one fact is argument enough, according to the Prince of the Apostles, to prove the Divinity of Jesus and the truth of the religion that He taught.

"My brethren," says St. Peter, addressing the Jews from the steps of the Supper Chamber on the great day of Pentecost, "see we have here among us still the tomb of David, the greatest man of our race. The dust of that monarch is still there enclosed. Go out to that of Jesus Christ, you will find His Body there no longer. He has rescued Himself from the arms of death. This Jesus Christ, Whom you have crucified, Whom I announce to you, is then greater than David. He is greater than man. He is Divine, and the religion which He preached to you is true."

He has conquered, then—this "Lion of the tribe of Judah!" He has conquered death itself! He is become more powerful it would seem since He was crucified! He has bound that strong arm that had power since the beginning of the world to bind all human powers! He has gloriously triumphed; and this triumph of Jesus Christ over death and hell is the source of our triumph also, and of our glory—the invincible proof of our faith; the foundation of our hope; the source of all our graces.

II.

1. But it is not enough for us to glory with our Saviour in His Resurrection from the tomb; we must share also in His triumph; and as He has arisen to a life of glory, so should we arise to a life of grace and Christian perfection modeled after His.

Brethren, we have sinned in the past; we have basely sunk into the grave of sin! And, oh, how many are there today in this religious city of ——, who, in spite of the graces of the holy Lenten season; in spite of the overwhelming graces of Redemption week; in spite of the

joyous notes of the Easter bells proclaiming a jubilee of graces to the whole Church of Christ, still lie prone in the grave of mortal sin.

But by the grace of God we can arise; and by the power of that omnipotent arm that raised our Saviour from the tomb, we also are enabled to break the bonds of spiritual death and lead a life conformable to that of the risen Saviour.

And this is what should engage our earnest attention today, especially if this bright Easter day should find us still shrouded in the winding bands of spiritual death.

2. But, brethren, I would not have you believe that every resurrection is commendable, is profitable to the soul, and pleasing to God, in Whose Name, apparently, it is effected. For there is a false resurrection, and there is an imperfect one. There is a resurrection that is to result only in a temporary spiritual life, and there is one that precipitates the soul into greater miseries.

We read in Scripture that the unhappy Saul, the first king of Israel, being hard pressed by the Philistines and feeling himself abandoned by the Spirit of God on account of his sins, sought the witch of Endor and besought of her to raise for him the ghost of Samuel, the prophet, in order that he might declare to him the will of Heaven. And it pleased Almighty God to permit the ghost of Samuel to arise from the ground in the form of an aged man clothed in a mantle. And addressing the king in tones of anger he reproached him, saying: "Why do you come thus to trouble my repose? Know, then, that your crimes shall meet with their reward. Tomorrow you and your sons shall die

by the sword, and your kingdom shall pass to David, whose presence you cannot bear." This uprisal of Samuel from the tomb was not a true resurrection; it was but a phantom. That soul was not restored by conjunction with the body. Its presence there was a forced one, and one that portended dire evils to the unhappy king and all his family.

Ah, how many resurrections from sin at a time like this that are so only in appearance? How many who, driven by human respect, by the force of custom, by the threats of the Church's penalties—how many, I say, comply externally with the Paschal Duty; rise, apparently, by Confession and Communion; whilst all the time they retain their affection for sin—whilst they refuse to give up evil associations which were the cause of their former falls? They rise, indeed, but their resurrection is a phantom—is the ghost of a conversion. Their hearts are not warmed with the living fire of charity. Their minds are not enlightened by the light of grace. Their souls remain dead and buried in the grave of habitual sin, and their Confessions and Communions call down upon them rather the chastisement of final impenitence, which is the forerunner of their everlasting ruin. There is, then, in the Christian world a false resurrection, and one that portends dire evils to come.

3. There is a second kind of resurrection spoken of in Scripture, a true and genuine one indeed, and one effected by the intervention of the Almighty power, but still a temporary and imperfect one—a resurrection which time will bring to naught and which is destined to be swallowed up in the devastation which awaits all things perishable. Such is the resurrection recorded

in the Gospel accomplished by our Lord on the widow's son of Naim. Such was the resurrection of Lazarus, the circumstances of which you all remember so well. Such was the resurrection of the daughter of Jairus. Such were the resurrections of many men and women effected by our Lord and His apostles and the saints of the Old and of the New Testament. These were all true and valid resurrections, it is true, and they were accomplished, and could be accomplished, only by the outstretched arm of God. But, alas, the widow's son of Naim died again; and Lazarus died again; and Demetrius died again; and the widow's son of Serepta died again; and the daughter of Jarius died again; and Tabitha died again; and all those raised from the dead through the prayers of the saints of every age sank again into the grave, and all at last were made to submit to that inexorable sentence pronounced by an outraged God for sin: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread all the days of thy life, till thou returnest to the earth out of which thou wast taken; for, dust thou art and into dust thou shalt return."

Ah, how many are there here today, perhaps, who have risen with the help of God, from a career of sin, and who at this moment feel within them the lusty life of grace, but who will again, through human frailty, through neglect of prayer, through the strength of their own sinful passions and bad habits, above all, through their imprudently thrusting themselves into the occasion of sin, fall again into a state of spiritual death, never again, perhaps, to be awakened to a life of grace by the quickening voice of God, but to be abandoned to eternal reprobation. These are the abortions of the Church's spiritual life and the victims of their own insane folly.

4. But, give me a spiritual uprisal modeled truly on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Give me a spiritual life analogous to His during the Easter days. Give me a resurrection, I say, modeled on that of Jesus Christ, and an after-life like to His, of Whom the Gospel tells us that to show that He was truly risen from the dead He performed the functions of a living man by daily conversing with the disciples, by eating with them, and by the performance of other vital actions. So you, I say, show forth to the world that your resurrection to the spiritual life is one effected by the help of grace and destined to be perpetual, by speaking, aye, thundering in the ears of God the voice of prayer and of contrition for your past sins; by eating, yes, sharing in the ineffable banquet of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ by frequent Communion; and by doing the works of Christ; that is, by the practice of the Christian virtues. Give me such a resurrection and such a subsequent life. Of such a one it can be said what was said of Jesus Christ—that being risen from the dead "He dieth no more; death hath no longer dominion over Him," but the supernatural life begun here by grace is destined to be perfected hereafter in glory.

SECOND SERMON: SATISFACTION.

1. Introduction—Explanation of satisfaction naturally joined to that of contrition and confession, inasmuch as it, together with them, constitutes the matter of penance; and those parts it belongs to the penitent to contribute. Its definition.

2. What satisfaction considered as an essential part of penance consists of. Reason is given for its absolute necessity for a valid reception of the Sacrament; heart-searching examination of conscience on this point inculcated, and the severity of the requirements insisted on.

3. What satisfaction, considered as an integral part of penance, consists of, and its obligation on the penitent. Its non-fulfilment does not cause the sins forgiven to revive: but is itself a new sin, and a mortal one at that, when the matter is considerable. Its non-fulfilment, furthermore, a cause of the withdrawal of grace.

4. This actual satisfaction looks in the first place to the vindicating God for the injury done Him by sin. This explained —By sin we incur, first, the culpa, or guilt, and, second, the poena, or debt, which is an eternal debt in the case of mortal sin. In the Sacrament of Penance, first, the guilt of sin is remitted, and, second, the eternal debt is changed into a temporal one, which must be undergone either in this life, or in Purgatory. This remission of the guilt of sin, and of the eternal punishment effected in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ. The temporal punishment to be undergone by the penitent constitutes satisfaction. Exhortation.

1. After having explained to you the first two parts of penance in a manner that I trust will enable you to appreciate their importance more fully than perhaps you did before, and to bring a more enlightened knowledge to the reception of this great Sacrament, it now remains for me to instruct you on the third part, namely, Satisfaction. I join this part to Contrition and Confession, inasmuch as it together with them constitutes what is called the matter of penance; and these three acts or parts of the Sacrament it belongs entirely to the penitent to contribute; whereas, the form of the Sacrament, or Absolution, is a thing that it concerns the confessor alone to have a thorough knowledge.

Satisfaction is a part of penance to which I fear all the attention that it deserves is not given ordinarily by penitents, alas, to the profanation of the Sacrament and their own spiritual loss.

Satisfaction is, as you are taught in the Catechism, a reparation of the injury offered to God by sin and of the injustice done to our neighbor.

2. Now, we can look on Satisfaction either as an essential part of the Sacrament of Penance, or solely as an integral part of it. Considered as an essential part of Penance, it is the desire and the sincere will which every penitent ought to have of satisfying God and the neighbor, and in this sense it is so necessary to the Sacrament that if it be wanting, the Absolution is absolutely null and void. For, it is presumed when Absolution is pronounced over the penitent that he is sincerely sorry for his sins, and it is only on this condition that it has effect.

Now, true sorrow for an offense carries necessarily with it a sincere desire to make amends to the injured party. Unless, therefore, the penitent have the sincere intention of making satisfaction to the One and the other, there is no true Contrition, and, consequently, no pardon as the result of Absolution.

Examine yourselves carefully on this point, my dear brethren, and do not flatter yourselves. There is question here not only of being resolved to perform the penance which the confessor enjoins, for, ordinarily, penitents are resolved on that point; there is question, moreover, of being firmly resolved to repair as far as is in your power the consequences of sin, of rendering to God the honor you have deprived Him of by your offenses, and of repairing entirely the injury you have done the neighbor. This latter takes in, for example, the restoring the neighbor his goods of which he has been unjustly deprived, the repairing his reputation, the being reconciled with him, the remedying the bad example you may have given him; in a word, the putting things in the state in which they were before your sin.

What a subject for fear for us all, my dear brethren?

Who can flatter himself with having been always in those holy dispositions of which I speak? What ought those to judge who defer unnecessarily the payment of their just debts; who delay always to restore ill-gotten goods; to repair their scandals; to restore to the neighbor the honor and reputation they have robbed him of? What ought those, I say, judge of their confession? What ought those think who delay to perform the almsgiving, and prayers, and fasts, that have been enjoined on them in the sacred tribunal of Penance; who make no scruple to omit them, either wholly or in part; who never seek an occasion of being reconciled with their neighbors; who, on the contrary, seem to avoid them and fly from them with care? Why, that they had no sincere intention of satisfying God or their neighbor at all, and that, therefore, they ought to look on those confessions as null, and repair them as soon as they can, after having performed those duties by a General Confession.

3. Satisfaction, considered as an integral part of penance, consists in the fulfilment of this desire and resolution, and this actual satisfaction obliges under pain of mortal sin when the matter is considerable. I do not say that the failure of a penitent to fulfil what he has promised sincerely in confession is a thing that causes the pardoned sins to revive in his soul. No, the gifts of God, of which the pardon of sins holds the first rank, are without recall, according to the teaching of the apostle; that is to say, that sins once pardoned appear no longer; they are buried in an eternal oblivion. But I say that he who fails to accomplish what he promised, and who is afterwards wanting in the will to make satisfaction for his offenses, renders himself guilty of a new mortal sin, of a crime which contains both a monstrous

ingratitude towards God, and often a crying injustice towards the neighbor. This is not all. This omission of a duty so essential dries up in some sort the source of grace, and thus exposes the sinner to fall again into the sins that he had confessed, and even into others still more grievous.

4. Actual satisfaction consists, then, in the first place, in vindicating God for the injury we have done His infinite Majesty by our sins, and this sort of reparation can be done by all sorts of good works, and particularly by prayer, fasting, that is, self-denial and penance, and almsgiving, which includes the contributing generously to all kinds of charitable or religious ends.

This obligation of satisfying the justice of God comes from the punishment we deserve on account of sin; and on this point I must remark that by sin we incur not only the *culpa,* or guilt, which is that stain, that deformity which renders the sinful soul so hideous in the sight of God; we incur, moreover, the *poena,* or debt, which is an eternal debt when we speak of mortal sin.

Now, in the Sacrament of Penance this eternal debt or punishment is changed into a temporal one, which we must of necessity undergo either in this life by satisfactory works, or in the other by the terrible fire of purgatory.

Such, dearly beloved, is the disposition of Divine providence; such are the decrees of the Almighty, decrees unchangeable, so that sin must be punished as much as it deserves. It was in order to cancel the eternal punishment of mortal sin that Christ died; and had it not been for the merits of His death the whole human race would have been condemned to eternal privation of the beatific

vision on account of Original sin, and the greater number to the eternal punishment of hell on account of mortal sin.

But although Christ made reparation to His Father for all the sins that have been committed since the beginning of the world, and that will be committed to the end of time, we are not, therefore, dispensed from undergoing a temporal punishment according to the degree and measure determined by Divine justice, in view of the number and the grievousness of our sins. For, although sin be remitted to us in the Sacrament of Penance as far as regards the guilt and the eternal punishment in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, there remains a temporal punishment to be undergone, and this is the satisfaction we must make to God.

See, then, dearly beloved, that you make this satisfaction to God by your penitential actions now. Practise works of penance here where good works are not only satisfactory but meritorious, and where the mercy of God tempers His justice, and put not off this great work to the hereafter where sufferings are satisfactory alone, and where God's justice, rigorous and unflinching, shall be dealt. Thus you will cancel the great debt you owe to God, and you will at the same time earn for yourselves an everlasting crown of glory.

THIRD SERMON: SATISFACTION—SEVERITY OF THE TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT EXACTED FOR FORGIVEN SIN.

1. What the measure of temporal punishment that remains for each mortal sin is, we do not know. That it is very great, we can judge from the punishments exacted, first, by God, as in the case of David; and, second, by the Church, as declared in her penitential canons, which were the theological rules for the guid-

ance of confessors in the early ages of the Church. Examples of the heavy penances prescribed in those canons.

2. Awful realization of the severity of God's judgments, and of our indebtedness to His justice for our past sins. How the saints entered into the views of the Church as to that severity, and how they practised penance for their past sins.

3. Actual satisfaction looks, in the second place, to the making reparation to the neighbor of any injury we may have done him: v. g., it has regard to the restoration of his property or character; to a reconciliation with him, and to the reparation of scandals we may have given him. All this to be done entirely and promptly when within our power, and this under pain of mortal sin when the matter is considerable. Appeal.

1. In our last discourse we studied what satisfaction is considered either as an essential part of the Sacrament of Penance, or, as an integral part. We considered it as it looks to the reparation due to God for sin, and as it looks to a restoration to the neighbor of the rights we by our sins have deprived him of.

It now remains for us to consider the gravtiy of the temporal punishment exacted by God for sins forgiven in Confession, and the urgency of repairing the injury done the neighbor. And, first, the gravity of the punishments due for sin.

What is the measure of the temporal punishment that remains for each mortal sin? This is a thing we do not know, my brethren. Nevertheless, we can form a conjecture, and even judge that it is very great, since we have examples that are a proof to us that it is so. David obtained the pardon of his adultery and murder. He could not doubt it, since the prophet Nathan assured him of it on the part of God. This penitent king made extraordinary satisfaction to the Supreme Majesty Whom he had offended. He clothed himself with a rough sackcloth; he lay on a hard bed; he mixed ashes with his bread and tears with his drink; he bedewed

every night his bed with tears. And yet the justice of God was not satisfied. It permitted that there should befall this illustrious penitent many grievous trials. The fruit of his adultery died. He saw his whole household in frightful disorder. One of his daughters was dishonored by her own brother. One of his sons murdered another and endeavored afterwards to take from himself his kingdom, together with his life. His old age was blighted with sorrow.

Holy Church, guided by the spirit of God, makes well known to us what are her sentiments on this subject. She judges that the temporal punishments due to mortal sin must be very great indeed, when in her penitential canons she prescribes for a single mortal sin satisfactions long and painful, satisfactions, the very reading of which causes us fear and astonishment.

Allow me to put before you a few examples of the satisfactions she prescribes in those canons, which were the theological rules for the guidance of confessors in the early ages of the Church, and you can judge for yourselves how light are the penances that are imposed in our times in the sacred tribunal, and how far removed from the salutary rigor of former times.

For having consented to a bad thought, it was ordained by the canons to fast three days on bread and water. For having been drunk once there were fifteen days of fast in the same manner, that is to say, on bread and water. For each day of the fast of Lent that had been broken, there were appointed seven fast days with the same rigor. For having spoken in the church during the public ceremonies, it was commanded that the offender fast ten days, also on bread and water. For public crimes and crimes accompanied with scandal, and for

certain enormous excesses, there were penances of three years, of seven years, of ten years, and even penances that lasted the whole life.

Moreover, during all this time the penitents were obliged to remain at the church doors during the Divine Office and Mass. They were clothed in sackcloth, and covered with ashes, and they wore neither arms, as was usual at the time, nor linen, nor were they permitted to appear with the marks of their dignity. They ate neither flesh nor fish, except on solemn festivals. All amusements were forbidden them. They fasted almost constantly, and often on bread and water. This usage lasted many hundred years, and would to God that the laxity of Christians had not put an end to it; we would not today witness so many disorders in the world.

2. What, then, my brethren; was the Church of God deceived, she who is guided by, nay, who in her teaching is the very organ and mouthpiece of the Holy Ghost? Was she too severe? Is not sin today as great an offense against the Divine Majesty as it was in those times? Ah, what a subject for fear for us who do so little penance! The saints had very different sentiments, and they always entered into the views of the Church. What have not true penitents in all times done? What austerities, what penance did not a Peter, a Paul, a Magdalen, or so many others perform? What do not so many truly converted sinners do today who are confined in monasteries where they practise great austerities, where fast, labor, silence, and prayer, take up all their time, without there remaining the least part for lawful recreations? How many others in the world who perform severe penances? What will become of us, my dear brethren? What will be our lot if we have not

the happiness of dying with our sins pardoned both as regards their guilt and as regards the temporal punishment due to them? How long shall we be in the torturing fires of purgatory, and what terrible torments shall we not suffer there?

3. Actual satisfaction consists, in the second place, in making reparation to the neighbor for any injury we may have done him. It has regard, as I have already observed, to the restitution of his property or character, if one has unjustly taken it away or damaged it; to a reconciliation with him, and to the reparation of scandals we may have given him. But it concerns the doing all this entirely and promptly when within our power, and this under pain of mortal sin when the matter is considerable.

Let us, dearly beloved, by salutary satisfactions repair the injury we have done to God and to our neighbor by our past sins, that thus we may anticipate the terrible judgments of God Who is the avenger of the rights of both, and escape the punishments meted out for sin in the scorching fires of Purgatory.

LOW SUNDAY.

FIRST SERMON: CHARACTERISTICS OF JESUS CHRIST.

"I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh to the Father but by Me."—John xiv, 6.

1. Introduction—The incident that called forth this saying is recorded. That God was the knowable truth, and a certain life eternal, were known to the pagan philosophers; but Christ by proclaiming Himself the way, also, shows how we are to attain to union with Him. It is by the imitation of His virtues.

2. In studying the life of Christ the first characteristic that strikes us in that life is His sinlessness. In the imitation of our Lord, the ultimate aim of our endeavors must be to attain to a sinlessness like His. The attainment of perfect sinlessness, not possible to us in this life; but we can diminish indefinitely the commission of sin, and it is only by waging a continuous warfare against sin that we can approximate to the sinlessness of Jesus Christ.

3. In this spiritual welfare we must, even as is done in physical warfare, try to remove our leading opponent. This leading opponent is pride. Pride, a falsehood and a robbery.

4. We must, on the contrary, lay hold on humility, which is truth. To its practice Our Lord invites us in imitation of Himself. Humility, the second characteristic of Jesus Christ, and it must be ours also, because it is the hidden principle of sinlessness. If we would be humble we must court humiliations and perform acts of humility.

5. Lastly, by laying hold on the humility of Jesus Christ, we attain to life. All supernatural perfection a participation in the essential life of God.

This given in an especial manner to the humble, and with it we are made conformable to the suffering life of the Redeemer, which is the most privileged of all lives. Suffering was the third characteristic of the life of Our Lord. It will be also characteristic of those who participate in His Divine life. Appeal.

1. Thus spoke our blessed Lord on the evening of the Last Supper. He had been preparing the minds of His disciples for the grief of His departure from

among them, when Thomas interjected: "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?" The Saviour answered: "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life," and "no man cometh to the Father but by Me."

That God was the knowable truth, and a certain life eternal, were known even to the pagan philosophers; but Christ by proclaiming Himself the way also shows us how we are to attain to a union with Him. It is by the imitation of His virtues. By studying His doctrines we arrive at the knowledge of the truth which is Himself. He is the fountain of truth, and we imbibe His truth by studying the lessons He gave us. And by practising the Christian virtues we come into the possession of the life, or union with God by love. Hence, He adds: "No man cometh to the Father but by Me."

2. Now, in studying the life of Christ, the first characteristic that strikes us in that life is His sinlessness. And this characteristic was so conspicuous in Him that even His enemies who were ever carping at what He said and did could find no tangible fault to lay hold on, so that He could challenge them and say: "Which of you shall convince Me of sin?"

In the imitation of our Lord the ultimate aim of our endeavors must be to attain a sinlessness like His. It is true we can never attain to a perfect sinlessness in this life, for we carry ever within us the seeds of corruption: and the greatest saints never did attain to perfect sinlessness. But though we cannot attain to perfect sinlessness in this life, we can diminish indefinitely the commission of sin. And if we cannot wholly exterminate sin, we can at least make our sins and imperfections the instruments of our perfection by

the contrition we have for them. In this we must do what a good housekeeper does in the keeping of her house, or what a careful gardener does in the care of his garden. Go into two houses or two gardens; you see one of these houses clean and neat; not a speck of dust on the floor or furniture; everything is in its place. There is a look of taste and refinement about the whole place. Go into the other; you see filth and disorder everywhere. And so with the gardens. That of the careful gardener has a look of care and industry all over it. The borders are trim; the trees and shrubs are pruned; there is no sign of weeds or overgrowth anywhere: the flowers and plants are healthy and luxuriant, while that of the sluggard offends you at every turn. How this difference? Is it because no dust ever enters into the house of the good housekeeper? or because no weeds ever crop up in the garden of the careful gardener? No; but because those are ever careful and industrious, and they have at heart the objects under their charge.

And so it must be with us in the government of our souls; we must be like good housekeepers, ever polishing and setting in order our furniture; we must be like careful gardeners, with hoe and pruning knife ever in hand, cutting away the weeds and overgrowth of venial sin. This is the Christian warfare that must ever go on in the Christian soul, a warfare against venial sin. It is a warfare that must be carried on not around the walled city of the Commandments, but on the open plain of the Gospel counsels, where the devil cannot lay surprises for us, and it is only by waging thus a continuous warfare against venial sin that we can approximate to the sinlessness of Jesus Christ.

3. I have called the life of the good Christian a warfare. Now, in warfare the commanders make a particular direction against the superior officers of the enemy. To this effect they have chosen bands of sharpshooters whose business it is to mark out and pick down the leaders, knowing well that if they are removed the rank and file can be put into disorder and mowed down like stubble. Brethren, in the fight for virtue we have opposed to us superior foes who are more subtle than others, and who are as the officers who make use of the others, and the chief of those is pride.

This vice is at the back of all those acts that bring about our fall. It is the source of that self-confidence that makes us trust in our own powers, of that self-seeking that draws us to the commission of nearly all our sins, of that sullen humor that prevents us from receiving well correction for our faults, of that love of success and striving after distinction and posts of trust. It was it that first made its appearance in God's universe in heaven and in Paradise. It is the one that resists God most and prevents the entrance of grace into our souls. And, hence, in return, as we are told in Scripture, "God resists the proud." "He casts down the mighty," that is, the arrogant, "from their seats." And why? Because pride is a falsehood and a robbery—a falsehood; and the God of truth cannot bear a falsehood. It assumes to itself what it does not possess. St. Bernard describes humility, the virtue opposed to pride, as truth; the acknowledgment of ourselves such as we are before God and man. The proud do not acknowledge themselves such as they are. Like Satan, while being in reality vile creatures, they would make it appear that they are gods.

It is a robbery. It strives to take from God what is His alone. The proud ever seek their own glory, when glory belongs to God alone. It is the prerogative that He is most jealous of. He is Goodness itself. Hence, He gives us all goods, health, talents, riches, grace, and so forth; for, goodness is diffusive of itself; but glory He will have for Himself alone. Nor can He do otherwise, for His perfection demands that all His gifts return to Him.

Well, pride comes and tries to push God from His glory seat, to set up a rival throne. The proud would have all worship them. This God cannot bear. "He resisteth the proud." "He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their hearts." "He hath put down the mighty from their seats." And holy writers interpreting passages such as these say that pride and love of dominion are a sure mark of reprobation.

This intolerable tyrant that opposes God's rights must then be laid low in every quarter in which it makes its appearance, whether in love of success for its own sake, or in love of office, or in self-seeking, or in a sullen humor that resists correction, or in any way seeking human glory in our actions, because it is a falsehood and a robbery.

4. We must, on the contrary, lay hold on the truth, which is humility, by the imitation of Jesus Christ. And to this practice so salutary He invites us in a special appeal. "Learn of Me," He says, "learn of Me; for I am meek and humble of heart."

Yes, Jesus was humble. It was His second characteristic, and it must be ours also, because it is in truth the hidden principle of sinlessness. St. Augustine asks the question: "What is the beginning of perfection?" and

he answers, "Humility." "What is the progress of perfection?" And again he answers, "Humility." "And what is the completion of perfection?" Once again, "Humility." And St. Francis calls humility by the endearing name of sister. It is a virtue which attracts all by its beauty, even God Himself, and, hence, it is said in Scripture: "The proud God sees afar off," that is, He keeps them at a distance from Him; "but His eyes are ever turned towards the meek and humble." "He hath lifted the poor man from the dunghill," that is, from the humble knowledge of himself, "and hath placed him with the princes of His kingdom." And the Blessed Mother sings in her canticle, "He hath looked down on the humility of His handmaid, and behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed."

In order to lead us to the practice of this virtue, see the many examples of humility given by our blessed Lord. He willed to be born of poor parents, to lead an obscure life. He bore contradiction with meekness. He washed His disciples' feet. He died an ignominious death on the cross. If we would be humble, we must court humiliations, and perform acts of humility without number; for all the moral virtues are acquired and preserved by repetition of their acts; and so of humility also.

5. Lastly, by laying hold on the truth, which as I have said, is the humility of Jesus Christ, we attain to life. He is the Life essential, and all supernatural perfection is a participation in the essential life of God. By laying hold of the truth, which is humility, we attain the life of our souls. For, God gives His grace to the humble. And by grace we are made conformable to the suffering life of the Redeemer.

This was His third characteristic: suffering, sorrow. He came into the world amid suffering. "He was in labors from His youth." Privation was His normal state. Persecution was His portion in life. The cross was always in His heart.

Now, the more we conform to the life of Jesus Christ, the more we put on Jesus Christ, the more we shall have to suffer. Sacrifice and suffering were the lot of the saints. Who could be more closely united to Jesus Christ than he who said, "I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me?" And "I know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him Crucified?" And "God forbid that I should glory in anything save in the Cross of my Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified in me, and I to the world."

Let us endeavor all our lives to approximate to the sinlessness of Jesus Christ by waging a continual warfare against venial sin, and by the practice of a sincere humility; that so we may attain to the most privileged of all lives, namely, a participation in the suffering and crucified life of Jesus Christ, which is a sure way to the possession of eternal life hereafter.

SECOND SERMON: CONDITIONS OF SATISFACTION—THE FIRST THREE.

1. Satisfaction, as well that which is imposed by the confessor, as that which one performs otherwise to supply for it, should have five conditions: 1, it ought to be performed in the state of grace. It ought to be, 2, satisfactory; 3, medicinal; 4, proportionate, and 5, exact.

When it is asserted that Penance or satisfaction ought to be performed in the state of grace, it is not to be inferred that Penance performed in the state of mortal sin does not suffice (unless it be one of those good works which are null if they be not performed in this state), but that the Penance thus performed does not produce any merit for eternal life.

2. What is meant by saying that Penance should be satisfactory, and why it should be,—example. How Penance is made satisfactory, viz., by repairing as far as is possible the injury done to God by sin, and the evil caused the neighbor.

3. What is meant by saying that satisfaction ought to be medicinal? As spiritual evils like corporal ones are cured by contrary remedies, so we are preserved from the ones as from the others in the same way.

1. In our instruction of last Sunday we considered Satisfaction—first, as an essential, and second, as an integral part of the Sacrament of Penance. Today we shall occupy ourselves briefly with the consideration of the conditions of Satisfaction. And I say that Satisfaction, as well that which is imposed by the confessor as that which a person performs otherwise to supply for it, should have five conditions. It ought to be performed in the state of grace. It ought to be satisfactory, medicinal, proportionate, and exact.

First, Penance or Satisfaction ought to be performed in the state of grace.

I do not wish to state that the Penance which has been imposed in confession is not sufficiently fulfilled should a person have performed it in the state of mortal sin. But I say that the Penance thus performed does not produce any merit for eternal life. Every work done in the state of mortal sin is a dead work, a work lost for heaven. Moreover, if a confessor has given for Penance any one of those good works which are null if they be not performed in the state of grace, as, for instance, Communion, the Paschal duty, etc., the penitent does not satisfy if he does not perform them in this state; and besides, he incurs the additional guilt of sacrilege.

Let us deplore the blindness of so many Christians who perform mortifications and penances, who fast,

pray, assist at Mass, give alms, and perform other good works in the miserable state of mortal sin, and who thereby lose their pains and labor for eternity. How many are there who pass almost all their life in this deplorable state, and who could well say at the hour of death, "we have labored throughout our whole life, and we have gained nothing; because we have labored in the night of mortal sin."

2. In the second place, Penance should be satisfactory.

By this I mean that it ought to vindicate against the sinner the Supreme Majesty outraged by sin, and to restore to the neighbor the goods of which he has been unjustly deprived. Each species of sin does a particular injury to God and the neighbor. By Penance, then, we must labor to repair those injuries. A proud man has taken from the Sovereign Lord the honor that is His due to attribute it to himself. He has at the same time despised his neighbor in setting himself above him. He should, by Penance, try to restore to God his honor by humbling himself profoundly, and he should, besides, abase himself before his brethren as much as he has exalted himself above them. A miser has done an injury to God and the neighbor—to God, by abandoning Him to attach himself to perishable riches—to the neighbor, by taking from him his goods, or refusing him the help he owed him. An impure person has perpetrated a cruel outrage on the Holy Ghost by profaning his body, which is His temple. He has also offended his neighbor by giving him bad example, perhaps even by making him the accomplice of his shameful actions. He must labor with all his power to repair those evils by

mortification, fasts, austerities, good examples, and holy living.

A scandal-giver has waged an open war against God by debauching His subjects, and by snatching from Him souls purchased by the Blood of the Saviour. He has also done his neighbor the greatest evil that was in his power by opening for him the abyss of hell. He must spare nothing to prevent the consequences of his evil example, to remedy his scandals, to save as many souls as he has ruined.

In a word, all sinners ought to repair as far as is in their power the injury they have done to God and the evil they have caused their neighbor. This they can do, as regards God, by a holy and penitential life, by a profound humility, by an exact observance of His law, by an entire renunciation of the world, its false honors, its base pleasures, its perishable riches, its manners, its maxims and profane amusements, by an interior crucifixion, and by continual resistance to their passions and bad inclinations; and as regards the neighbor, by the restitution of the goods they have taken from him, by the reparation of his reputation or honor, by reconcilation, by good example, and by assiduity in fulfilling all the duties by which they are bound towards him. This is what is called true satisfaction.

3. The third condition of Penance, or Satisfaction, is that it be medicinal. This means that it is not enough that satisfaction repair the evils and disorders our past sins have caused; it should, moreover, strengthen the penitent against a fatal relapse. To what purpose is it that a sick person should have been cured of a dangerous malady if he is to relapse

into it again a few days afterwards? The physician who would have attended him would have indeed lost his time and trouble, and the sick person would have so much the greater reason to complain, as his relapse would be so much the more dangerous than the original attack. In the same way, what would be the good of a penitent's having obtained the pardon of his offenses, and of his having been reconciled with God, if he fall again into his sins? "His last state would be," according to the saying of Holy Scripture, incomparably "worse than the first."

It is then essential for those who have entered into the state of grace by the Sacrament of reconciliation to do penances which will preserve them from relapse. Confessors are directed to impose such penances on them, and penitents themselves should perform others which will have the same effect. As spiritual evils, like corporal ones, are cured by contrary remedies; so we are preserved from the ones as well as the others in the same way. A converted sinner ought then, in order to strengthen himself against relapse, to do penances which attack his predominant passion and which contradict his bad inclinations. He who has been subject to drunkenness, for instance, ought to shun the saloon and the companions of his debauched life, and mortify his appetite. He who has been the slave of avarice ought to become generous in alms deeds, and liberal in his dealings with others. He who has emerged out of the mire of luxury ought to fast and mortify his guilty flesh by divers austerities; above all, he ought to pray and labor much and fly with care from the occasions of sin. He who has given way to pride and envy

ought to humble himself unceasingly, and practise charity towards the neighbor. Each penitent ought to examine and see what are the good works, the penances and mortifications he has found and judges to be the most efficacious to strengthen him against sin. These are some of the conditions which satisfaction, as well that which is imposed by the confessor, as that which one performs otherwise to supply for it, ought to have. See that yours be gifted with these conditions, so that repairing the injury done by your sins to God and the neighbor, you may enter the happy state of unindebtedness before God and the Church, and earn for yourselves the reward which good deeds merit with a just God Who will render to every one according to his works.

THIRD SERMON: CONDITIONS OF SATISFACTION—THE LAST TWO.

1. Recapitulation of the points of the past discourses, to show that the satisfactions which we perform for our sins ought to be done in the state of grace. They ought to be satisfactory and medicinal.

Design of present discourse is outlined to show that those satisfactions ought to be proportionate and exact.

2. What is meant by saying that satisfaction ought to be proportionate? What subject for fear and astonishment for us who have committed so many sins to reflect that we must pay to the last farthing our debt to God's justice, either in this world or in the next. Example of a penance inflicted by a Pope in the ninth century.

3. What is meant by the last condition of satisfaction, viz., exactness? What the penitent should do when the Confessor imposes a Penance that can be performed only with extreme difficulty, etc.

4. The many grievous faults of which many are guilty on this subject of the conditions of satisfaction.

5. Resolution.

1. In my last instruction I pointed out three of the conditions with which our satisfactions or penances done for sin ought to be gifted. They ought to be performed in the state of grace. They ought to be satisfactory and medicinal.

2. Today I come to point out two other conditions. And in the first place, those satisfactions and penances ought to be proportionate. They ought to correspond to the number and the grievousness of the sins one has committed. Thus, those who have been guilty of great sins, or who have committed a great number of them, ought to perform penances and satisfactions incomparably more considerable than those who are not near so guilty.

Ah, my brethren, what a subject of fear and astonishment for us who have committed so many sins during the course of our lives! There are those who have committed as many mortal sins as there are hairs on their head. There is need only of consent to a bad thought or desire for the commission of a mortal sin. The consent of an instant is sufficient. O my God! how many bad thoughts, how many criminal desires, how many scandalous words, how many actions contrary to Your holy law and to the rights of conscience, how many omissions of essential duties during the space of fifty or sixty years? And what penance must be done to repair so many disorders? Is it not enough to cause one to despair at the sight of them, did we not count on Your infinite mercy? Nevertheless, sinners, do not deceive yourselves; you must pay to the last farthing either in this world or in the other. It is our blessed Lord Himself Who has said so. How astonishing,

then, the madness of those who multiply their sins almost to the infinite, who "drink in iniquity like water," to speak the language of Holy Scripture, who think no more of a hundred mortal sins than of one! Oh, prodigious blindness! Oh, devilish state of soul! If a single grievous sin merits a great temporal punishment, for I suppose that it has been remitted in the Sacrament of Penance as to its guilt and the eternal punishment it deserved; if, nevertheless, the temporal punishment due to a single sin, according to the judgment of the Church, is so considerable, what will be the punishment of so many sins, of the prodigious number of crimes with which so many sinners find themselves burdened?

I have already shown you what is the judgment of the Church on this matter, but here is an example which ought to touch you sensibly: In the ninth century a nobleman having committed a crime—an enormous one, I avow, but one which can be in some manner excused—addressed himself to the Sovereign Pontiff to obtain absolution from him. Stephen V was the Pope who sat in the Chair of Peter. This Pope replied to the nobleman of whom I speak in these terms: "My son, I grant you the absolution of your sin, but it is on condition either that you enter a monastry to pass there the rest of your days; or, if you remain in the world, that you never eat flesh meat except on solemn feasts, and that you abstain from wine all your life, as also that you abstain from your ordinary amusements. I could," adds the Holy Father, "give you a more rigorous penance; but if you perform these well, God will grant you the pardon of your sin; but if you do not fulfil them you condemn yourself."

But what had he done, you will ask, to merit such a penance? He had his wife executed on suspicion of adultery; and he had this done in the violence of his anger. What do you think of this, my dear brethren? Does it not astonish you? Yet this conduct of the Pope was conformed to the Pontifical Canons received and acted on in the universal Church during many hundred years.

3. The fifth and last condition that satisfaction ought to have is exactness. This means to say that the penances that are imposed by confessors, and those that a person performs otherwise, ought to be performed with all necessary circumstances, as regards time, place, and manner, that are becoming. This condition is so much the more pressing as regards those circumstances that are essential, such as restitution, reconciliation, reparation of scandals, and other such like; and, with greater reason, those that regard immediately the honor and glory of God, and those that have been appointed in the holy tribunal; these ought to be performed entirely, and, as far as possible, without delay. But if it happens that a confessor imposes a penance which one can fulfil only with extreme difficulty, he should represent this difficulty to him with respect, and pray him to be pleased to impose another on him; and if a penance which one has accepted becomes for some reason impossible or very difficult in regard to his circumstances and disposition, he should address himself to the same confessor if he can, to have it changed, or to another, that he may learn from him what he ought to do.

4. These are, my dear brethren, the qualities and

conditions that Satisfaction and penances ought to have that they may be sufficient and acceptable to the Sovereign Master, Who weighs them in the balance of Divine justice, and Who rejects those that are not genuine. Have yours these characteristics? Do those that you performed in the past inspire you with a true confidence? Examine yourselves seriously on a matter so important. Of how many grievous faults are not many penitents guilty on this subject? Some, very far from accepting the penances which confessors impose on them with joy and submission, and with an entire persuasion that they deserve far greater ones, receive them only with murmuring, with impatience and disgust. Others dispute and seek all kinds of pretexts to dispense themselves from accepting the penances which confessors cannot dispense themselves from imposing without betraying their ministry. Many diminish, disguise, or conceal entirely their sins for fear of there being imposed on them a penance too severe in their opinion. We meet those who do not wish that confessors should enter too far into the secret of their interior, lest, knowing to the bottom all the malice of their sins, they might have reason for imposing a proportionate penance. Like a person who has a deep wound, you may touch him on other parts as much as you please, he does not complain; but if you desire to probe the wound, if you go near it, he cries out and is disturbed in an extraordinary manner, because pain compels him. Those penitents of whom I speak do not take it ill that the confessor questions them on certain matters; but if he tries to interfere with their predominant passion, they complain; they are vexed.

But it is there that is seated the great evil; it is in that region principally that it is necessary to apply the remedy.

There are others, lastly, who accept all the penances that are imposed on them, but they either defer performing them for a long time, or they perform them only in part, or they perform them with bad dispositions, or they neglect them entirely. Could there not be found among you, my dear brethren, some of those who are wanting in some one or other of those manners, perhaps in all? Are there not some of you who have omitted many times either wholly or in part the penances that were imposed on you, and which you have not thought of these many years? Yet these omissions can be in many cases mortal sins, and can cast those who are guilty of them into the misfortune of a sacrilegious Confession or Communion; nay, rather, into as many sacrileges as they have approached those tremendous Mysteries since they came into this state.

5. Let us labor seriously, my dear brethren, to perform a true penance, to satisfy God and the neighbor as far as, and in the manner, that we are bound. Let us not wait to pay in the other life what we owe to Divine justice, since satisfactions will there be without merit, and we shall have to pay them with the utmost rigor. But let us force ourselves to satisfy in this world, where sufferings and penances are meritorious as well as satisfactory, and where we can gain much at little cost, and in a short time. It is thus that we can procure for ourselves the happiness destined for perfect penitents.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

FIRST SERMON: THE GOOD SHEPHERD—FIRST PART.

"I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd giveth His life for His sheep," etc.—John x, 11-16.

I.

1. Introduction—Relates how our Lord was wont to represent Himself under various figures to express the capacity in which He appears amongst us, or the relation He comes to establish with us.

Some of these figures are recounted. Among them there are none more tender and soul-inspiring than this of the Good Shepherd.

2. The circumstances of place, climate, and the daily wants of the sheep, as well as the duties, the mode of life, and the dangers incident to the life of the Judean shepherd are set forth in order to make us understand how applicable was the discourse to the people whom He addressed, and how beautiful and tender the relations which our Good Shepherd has with us.

II.

1. Points of the entire discourse are set forth, and, notably, that in which He tells us that He knows His sheep, and even calls them by name.

2. The care and providence that our Good Shepherd has for us in general are described.

3. He not only watches over us and provides for us in general, He knows our individual needs, aspirations and dangers, and provides for them; nay, He has taught us even to look upon and address Him as "Our Father," which He truly is.

4. He even follows us in our wanderings, and with infinite fatigue and sorrow seeks us out amid the thorns and briars of sin. This, His whole public life as told in the Gospel makes known to us. Instances are given. It is in contemplating His life that "the charity of Christ presseth us" and compels us to a reciprocation of His love.

I.

1. Our Lord is wont in the Gospel to represent Himself to us under various figures, sometimes homely, sometimes tender, always noble and inspiring, and this

in order to express the capacity in which He appears amongst us, or the relations He comes to establish with us as our Lord, our Saviour, and our Judge. Thus, He says to us: "I am the light of the world"; "I am the true vine"; "I am the bread of life"; "I am the door"; "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

He represents Himself to us in the parables, now as the heavenly sower scattering the seed of His Divine Word in the hearts of men; now as the prudent merchant who gives all that He has to purchase the precious pearl of men's souls; now as the fisherman who casts the net of His world-wide apostolate into the sea of humanity and draws out fishes, both bad and good.

He is the Good Samaritan come down from the heavenly Jerusalem to cure poor stricken humanity fallen by the wayside and rifled of their patrimony by the infernal robber. He is the father of the prodigal, receiving back with love and tenderness His poor erring child. Or, He is, finally, a great landholder calling to account His servants and awarding them for their labor in His service with an eternal reward.

But in all the various figures under which He represents Himself to us in the Gospel there is not one more tender and soul-inspiring, not one that pictures more clearly the intimate and personal relations He as our God and Redeemer has with us, than does this discourse or parable of the Good Shepherd.

2. To understand how applicable this discourse was to the people whom He addressed, and to take in for our own benefit and instruction the beautiful and tender relations He has with us, we must take into account the circumstances of the place, the climate, and the daily wants of the sheep, as well as the duties, mode of life,

and dangers incident to the life of the Oriental shepherd. His audience had only to look around them to see the numerous flocks of sheep and goats browsing on the gray Judean hillsides. They were aware of the scanty pasturage those hills provided during the long, dry season of the year. They saw in different sheltered hollows those various sheepfolds made of mounds of heaped-up stones, and covered with brushwood and thorns to keep out the prowling wolf and the mountain lion. There also were the wells with the drinking troughs to which the different shepherds led their flocks at evening and provided them with cool, refreshing water.

The shepherd himself lived not only for, but with his sheep. At day he wandered over the hills in care of his flock and guarded them from the many fierce beasts that infested the country. He took care lest they should get entangled in the patches of scrub which in parts abounded, or he sought them out when they wandered alone into unfrequented places in search of food or adventure, to the great danger of their lives. At evening he gave his well-known call or whistle, and instantly the sheep began to tend towards the sheepfold to be enclosed for protection during the night when wild beasts went on prowl for their destruction. There he shut himself up with his flock, taking care to close and bar behind him the narrow door which might give entrance to the thief, to be up at the first streak of dawn to lead his flock to fresh pastures, numbering them as they passed out, or gamboled around him and behind him, for on him they depended for their all.

Moreover, he knew each of them individually, and their several wants and infirmities, for the flocks were

not, as a rule, very large. And as he lived with them continually, they knew his call and obeyed it with marvelous fidelity. This recognition and obedience was most remarkable at the drinking troughs where the shepherds congregated their different flocks about the same hour. Here where they got all commingled, and where usually they could be numbered by thousands, each shepherd at a time gave his peculiar call, and at once a commotion began to be observed among the numbers congregated. The sheep of each flock commenced to disentangle themselves from those of the stranger flock and to take the path that led towards their own fold, without a single one remaining behind, and this without the help of crook or dog, but through inveterate habit acquired from their birth.

Sometimes, too, a lion or a crouching panther with a bound made down on some unfortunate member of the flock, and then the courage and fidelity of the shepherd were put to the test. If he were a good shepherd, as were David and others to whom reference is made in Scripture, he would make straight for the fierce beast, and with crook or sling defend his helpless charge, even with danger to his life; whereas, if he were a hireling, or one that had no care for his sheep, he would slink away, leaving it to be devoured by its enemy, and this, says Our Lord, "because he was a hireling and had no care for his sheep." All this helps us, dearly beloved, to appreciate the statements and the tender allusions referring to Himself contained in this beautiful parable of our Lord.

II.

1. He represents Himself under the personation of the Good Shepherd, and us under that of His flock.

"But we are the people of His pasture," says Scripture, "and the sheep of His hand."

He signalizes two or three of the characteristics of the Good Shepherd and shows us how He fills them. He says that, "He knows His sheep, and that He even calls them by name."

He tells us that "when He hath let out His sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him."

Finally, He testifies that the Good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. In other words, our Lord makes known to us how in the care of us, His people, He has shown vigilance, and generosity, and example.

2. Yes, dearly beloved, Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd, has watched over us and provided for all our wants, and in the exercise of this function we will consider Him today.

What has He not done to prove His care and providence over us? Reflect on all that Jesus Christ as our God does and has done for us. He nourishes us. He clothes us. He has given us all that we have and are. For our material well-being how has He not brought into being all kinds of goods—the sun to shine on us and gladden us with light and warmth?—the earth, what is it but a richly spread out table, where all kinds of good things are provided for us?—the sea, the elements, the heavenly bodies, all things, are they not made to minister to our comfort and happiness?—And for our spiritual well-being, see what graces He has placed at hand to help us? Did He not institute the Sacraments to refresh our souls and nourish them with His graces? How many calls, and lights, and warnings has He not given us in life, and for our pasture has He not provided for us the delicious banquet of His own most precious Body and Blood?

3. But it is not alone that this Good Shepherd of our souls has watched over us in general and provided for our spiritual and temporal needs. He knows each of us individually, our wants, our aspirations, our trials, our sorrows, our dangers. He knows the many enemies that seek our destruction, and He wards off from us their harmful attacks. And for our consolation and joy He has taught us to address Him as Father, "Our Father," which He truly is, and to ask Him in this beautiful prayer all that could be needful to us.

4. He even follows us in our wanderings and with infinite fatigue and sorrow seeks us out amid the thorns and briars of sin.

Do you wish to know the pains and trouble to which our Good Shepherd has gone in search of His wandering sheep? You have only to open the Gospel and see the record of them. Count, if you can, all His steps and follow Him in all the journeys he made in order to find them and bring about their return. See Him seeking out one of His sheep, and, overwhelmed with weariness, sitting at Jacob's well. It was there, St. John tells us, that He found the Samaritan woman. See Him in the house of Simon the leper, seeking another sheep. It was the Magdalen. For, if she came to seek Jesus Christ in the house of the Pharisee, it was only by the motion of the Saviour's quickening grace which touched her heart and led her steps. See this Divine Shepherd seeking out another of His sheep in the custom-house of Capharnaum. It was St. Matthew whom He afterwards changed into a shepherd, and in Jerico, it was Zachaeus.

Behold, His bowels moved with compassion over all those poor sheep of the House of Israel wandering and

dispersed, giving Himself no rest, either by night or by day, running through the villages, the hamlets, the cities, the deserts, to bring back some one of His sheep, praying, groaning, beseeching the Majesty of His Father with cries ardent and vehement for their salvation, and at last sacrificing Himself for them upon the cross, to purchase them from the death which they had merited.

Oh! How often did He not wish to gather all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, all the Jews, and all men, "as the hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and they would not." We should have to enter into the adorable Heart of this Divine Shepherd to be able to measure the "length, and the breadth, and the height, and the depth," and the extent of the charity He had for the salvation of men.

See Him on the Cross even, where although His hands were attached with rough nails, this could not prevent Him from snatching from the devil one of His sheep which that devouring lion already looked upon as his assured prey. That was the good thief. See Him come down from heaven again expressly to find a wandering sheep. It was St. Paul whom He found on the road to Damascus. Finally, consider Him in Heaven praying to His Father without ceasing for the conversion and the salvation of His sheep, and ready to descend again anew if it were necessary and to immolate Himself for a single one of us. Oh, it is here, then, that we ought to say with St. Paul, that "the charity of Christ presseth us," and demandeth the return of our hearts to Him. For it is not enough that we admire the vigilance and charity and the sacrifice of our Good Shepherd towards us; we must on our part strive to second His beneficent designs. We must show our-

selves docile sheep of the Good Shepherd, keep close to Him, look up to Him for help and guidance, and depend upon Him.

SECOND SERMON: THE GOOD SHEPHERD—SECOND PART.

I.

1. A second characteristic of the Good Shepherd is that "he goes before his sheep and they follow him." The whole life of Jesus Christ an example to us of virtue.

2. His virtues shine out with peculiar splendor during the period of His Passion.

3. The misfortune that we do not reflect on the example given us is deplored. "With desolation," etc.

II.

1. The last characteristic is that He lays down His life for His sheep. The sad state to which the human race was reduced by sin is described.

2. But our Good Shepherd has "drawn us out of the jaws of the lion," even at the cost of His own life. He has done more. He has opened for us the gates of Heaven and given us access to the Father of Mercies.

3. The gratitude, confidence, and love with which we should repay Him in return for His goodness to us.

Appeal.

I.

1. In our former discourse we considered one of the characteristics of the Good Shepherd, namely, that "He knows His sheep, and even calls them by name."

A second characteristic of the Good Shepherd is that "He goeth before His sheep, and they follow Him." Here again Jesus Christ has shown us that He is truly the Good Shepherd, in that He goes before His sheep and sets them an example in well-doing. He goes before us. He does not ask us to practise any virtue, to bear

any trial or opposition, to make any sacrifice, that He Himself has not given us the example of. Study the life of Jesus Christ on earth. What a sublime example He gives us during His whole career! What humility, what charity, what generosity, what love of God and man! And what generous actions done on their behalf! His life, was it not one of prayer and mortification? Consider Him in His infancy, in the stable of Bethlehem, in His boyhood, in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth, in His public mission where He shows Himself God and true Son of Man on the one hand, by His preaching and miracles; and, on the other, by His mildness, His charity and humility. Oh, yes, He goes before us by the splendor of His actions and His virtues, as He said: "I have given you an example that as I have done, you also should do," and by His personal appeal made to us, not once, but many times, during His public career, when He says: "Learn of Me; for I am meek and humble of heart."

2. And as to His Passion, is it not an abyss of mysteries and virtues that no created mind can fathom? Who can conceive the greatness of the example given us in the mysterious prayer in the Garden of Gethsemani? the strength, the love, the tenderness, the courage shown, the forbearance towards His enemies? His mildness towards the unfaithful disciples? And the whole drama of the Passion, is it not an exhibition of virtue the like of which was never before shown in the world, and from which we may learn in every vicissitude and emergency of our earthly career?

3. But the misfortune is, dearly beloved, that men, that we do not study the example given us by our Lord during His mortal life. We do not hear His voice. We

are deaf to the pleadings His example makes to us to follow Him. We do not seek to know Him or to imitate Him. All occupied with worldly thoughts and concerns we give little thought to the high life of virtue to which He has called us as Christians, and the rewards He has in store for those who so hear and follow Him. "With desolation is the whole land made desolate, because there is no one who thinketh in the heart."

II.

1. But let us go on to consider the courage and sacrifice He, our Good Shepherd, has shown for us: "I am the Good Shepherd." He concludes, "and I lay down My life for My sheep."

The infernal wolf had come down on the fold of the Good Shepherd. He seduced the sheep. He enslaved them. He robbed them of their heavenly patrimony.

Consider how sad was the state to which the human race was reduced by sin. All men were in a state of bondage to this proud tyrant. They carried out all his behests. They raised up altars to him on every hilltop, and offered sacrifice to him. The whole world was a charnel house of sin and spiritual death, and man was helpless in his slavery.

2. But the Good Shepherd was faithful to His flock. He came down from heaven. He opened war on the infernal tyrant. "He drew us out of the jaws of the lion" and "carried us upon His shoulders rejoicing," torn and bleeding as we were, at every pore. And as the boy, David, long ago, with his crook and sling slew the lion and the bear that attacked the fold; so, too, Jesus Christ, by the power of His Cross rescued the souls of His people. He rescued us, I say, from the slavery to

sin and death. He did more. He opened up to us the Eternal Gates that were closed against us since the *Fall,* and gave us access to the Father of Mercies. But this He did only by the sacrifice of His life on Calvary. "I am the Good Shepherd," He says, "and I lay down My life for My sheep."

3. Dearly beloved, how can we ever repay the generosity and the sacrifices of our Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, towards us? And if He has shown such courage and generosity in redeeming us, how can we diffide in His goodness towards us, or doubt that He will stop at any sacrifice to protect and save us? Here it is that our trust must be without bounds, and our love and gratitude equally boundless. And this is what the great Father of the Church, St. Bernard, reminds us of when He says: "The measure of our love for God must be to love Him without measure."

Let this be the resolution that we make today as the practical result of the love and goodness shown us by Our Lord in the discourse of the Good Shepherd. And as it is the part of the good sheep to know the good shepherd, to hear his voice, and follow him, let us resolve to hereafter learn to know Jesus Christ, Who is seen in every truth of our holy religion, and the knowing of Whom is, as He tells us, "eternal life." Let us hear His voice, by obedience to His laws; and follow Him, by the practice of His virtues.

THIRD SERMON: ABSOLUTION—DISPOSITIONS REQUIRED FOR ITS VALID RECEPTION.

"Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them."—John xx, 23.

I.

1. Introduction—Relates to the incident of the cure of the paralytic by Our Lord in the synagogue of Capharnaum, and the murmurs of the Pharisees on the occasion. A similar cry of protest has resounded throughout the Protestant world at the claim of the Catholic priest to the power of forgiving sins in the tribunal of Penance. According to reasoning based on natural principles, such as those on which Protestantism is founded, there would seem to be cause for the protest, but, then, Christ's goodness and generosity in His dealings with us pass all the experiences of reason.

2. The exercise of this power of forgiving sins by the priest, or Sacramental Absolution, the third part of Penance, and is the form of it. In what Absolution consists. Two things to be clearly understood, first, that confessors are not at liberty to give Absolution when, and to whom they please; and, second, that Absolution is good and valid only when the penitent brings to the reception of the Sacrament proper dispositions of soul.

3. When confessors are strictly obliged to refuse Absolution to penitents, and when they are to defer it.

II.

1. The first case where a priest is obliged to refuse, or to defer Absolution is in regard to one who is ignorant of the principal mysteries of religion, or of the duties of his state. This has reference not only to those who are in the ignorance of which I speak, but also to those who are obliged to instruct persons of whom they have charge.

2. The second case is the habit of mortal, and sometimes even of venial sin.

3. The third case is in regard to one who is living in a proximate occasion of sin. Those who are engaged in dangerous professions or states must be put in the same rank. "If thy eye scandalize thee," etc.

4. The fourth case regards the restoration of goods to the neighbor, and the reparation of his honor or reputation.

5. The fifth case is in the subject of enmities. When a person is at enmity with his neighbor, he must forgive him before

being admitted to a participation in the Sacraments. These are the principal cases of refusal or delay of absolution.

6. It is shown that this conduct of delay or refusal of absolution is wise and necessary, as well for the confessor as for the penitent, and is very conformable to right reason and to the teachings of the Fathers of the Church.

I.

1. When our Lord beheld at His feet the paralytic who had himself lowered into His presence in the synagogue of Capharnaum, He was touched at the man's faith and piety, and, addressing him, said: "Be of good cheer, My son, thy sins are forgiven thee." And the Pharisees standing by began to murmur among themselves, saying: "This man blasphemeth; who can forgive sins but God alone?"

A similar cry of protest has resounded throughout the Protestant world for the last four hundred years at the claim of the Catholic priesthood to the power of forgiving sins in the tribunal of Penance; and our separated brethren never cease to repeat the saying of the Pharisee: "These men blaspheme; who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Brethren, according to the reasoning of flesh and blood, to reasoning based on merely natural principles, (and I fail to see how Protestants, pursuing logically their method of inquiry in matters of religion, can ordinarily rise above the natural), there would seem to be cause for their protest. For, who could ever have believed that our Lord would communicate to men—to weak and sinful men—this power most Divine, this seemingly incommunicable right of the Diety? And we need not be surprised to hear from those who little understand the Divine life and efficacy imparted to the Church by Christ the cry of astonishment and anger at

the claim: "These men blaspheme; who can forgive sins but God alone?"

2. Now, it is of the exercise of this power of forgiving sins, or Sacramental Absolution, that I will speak to you today. It is the third part of Penance, as I have already explained to you, and it pertains to the essence of the Sacrament, since it is the *form* of it. Absolution consists of those words which the confessor pronounces over the penitent: "I absolve you from your sins." They are as a sentence of mercy, on the one hand, for penitents well disposed; for, at the moment they are pronounced, all their sins are remitted to them, and this sentence of remission, of pardon and absolution is ratified in heaven. This is indubitable, according to the words which Jesus Christ has left us in the Gospel: "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them."

But, on the other hand, these words of Absolution are a sentence of justice, of anger and malediction for false penitents. For at the same moment that the priest says, "I absolve you," God says, "I condemn you."

Meanwhile in the world people do not pay attention to this, and they imagine, first of all, that confessors are at liberty to give absolution when they please and to whom they will; and, secondly, that every Absolution is good and valid, and that, provided the confessor has pronounced the words of Absolution over one, he is pardoned and all his sins are remitted. Now, these are two errors equally gross and ridiculous.

I avow that it is only the ignorant that are capable of entertaining them, but the number of those is very great. Let us disabuse them, and say that it is not true that confessors can give Absolution to whom and as they please. When they give Absolution unseason-

ably, that is to say, when they give it to the manifestly indisposed, they render themselves guilty of the profanation of the Sacrament, and, at the same time, they bring upon their penitents an extreme misfortune, since they are the cause of their committing a horrible sacrilege.

Confessors are very strictly obliged to refuse absolution to certain penitents, and to defer it to others. They must refuse it absolutely to those who not only are not disposed to receive it, but who refuse to take the necessary means to render themselves worthy of it. Such are those who find themselves in any one of the cases I am about to adduce. Confessors must defer absolution to those who are not sufficiently disposed, but who have the will to dispose themselves, and who are resolved to take means to this effect.

Confessors ought to be "faithful dispensers," according to the saying of St. Paul, and not cruel dissipators. This obligation of not giving Absolution in certain cases is founded on the rules which Holy Church has wisely established on this matter, and which are only an application of what Jesus Christ Himself prescribed for the administration of the Sacrament of Penance when instituting it. For this Divine Saviour said positively not only that sins would be *forgiven* those whom His ministers forgave, but, moreover, that they would be *retained* in the cases of those whom they retained. By this He made it evidently appear that there would be occasions where it would be necessary to retain sins. And He gave His Church a full and entire power to explain more amply His will on this article, as well as on others which regard the economy of the sanctification and the salvation of souls.

II.

Cases Where It Must Be Refused or Deferred.

1. I will lay before you now the principal cases in which confessors are obliged to refuse or defer Sacramental Absolution. These cases are given in the Councils of the Church, in the writings of the doctors and casuists, and we see them clearly detailed in the rituals, and moral theologies, in such sort that one should be in very bad faith or extremely ignorant not to know them.

The first case where a priest is obliged to refuse or to defer Absolution is in regard to a person who is ignorant of these principal mysteries of religion, which a Christian is absolutely obliged to know and to believe in order to be saved, and of the duties of his state. Time does not permit me to explain to you what are those mysteries and what are those duties. The detail of them would be too long. I speak solely of those one cannot be ignorant of without sin. You have been instructed on them elsewhere, and nearly all the familiar instructions that you listen to bear upon this matter. But remark that this regards not only those who are in the ignorance of which I speak; it regards those, moreover, who are obliged to instruct, or to procure the instruction of persons of whom they have charge. These are pastors and superiors, fathers and mothers, masters and mistresses, all the heads of families; and a confessor should not the less defer or refuse Absolution to them when they are wanting in their duties on this point than to those who are themselves in ignorance.

2. The second case for refusal of Absolution is the habit of mortal sin, and sometimes even of venial sin. It is one of the greatest difficulties of moral theology to

discern perfectly a sin of habit from one that is not, and especially in certain cases that are not rare. I leave this examination and this judgment to confessors who have great need of the light of the Holy Spirit and of using many precautions that they may not be deceived. In regard to venial sins of habit, a refusal of Absolution is imperative when they put him who is subject to them in the proximate danger of sinning mortally.

3. The third case for refusal or for delay of Absolution is the proximate occasion of sin. Such an occasion is that which causes him who is exposed to it always, or nearly always, to fall. We must put in the same rank dangerous professions and states—professions and states where one cannot be without danger of being lost. Now, amongst these there are some that are absolutely bad, and others that are so only relatively; that is to say, in regard to certain persons.

When the occasion is really proximate, or, when the profession or trade is absolutely bad, Absolution must be constantly refused till the penitent has quitted the occasion or given up the trade or profession. And in this matter there is no use in giving reasons of necessity or interest, such as penitents are wont to allege, any more than those which human respect is wont to suggest. We must not listen to such penitents when they say, for instance, that they cannot leave the house of this master; that they cannot give up this profession; that they cannot separate themselves from this person; that they cannot cease taking liquor, etc., under different pretexts, which are never wanting.

Jesus Christ has replied to all objections the strongest and the most specious that can be advanced on this

matter when He commanded us expressly to pluck out the right eye, to cut off the hand or the foot that would be to us a source of scandal and fall. By this He would have us to understand that were a person, a profession, a charge, or anything else as dear to us and as necessary as our eyes, our hands, or our feet, we must of necessity separate ourselves from that person or that thing if such be for us a proximate occasion of sin.

4. The fourth case for refusal or for delay of Absolution regards the restitution of goods to the neighbor, and the reparation of his honor and reputation. All those who have caused damage to the neighbor unjustly, or who retain his goods unseasonably; those who have taken from another his honor and reputation by lying or calumny, come under this heading. These must be sent away till they have given satisfaction by the most efficacious means in their power.

5. Finally, the fifth case is on the subject of enmities. When a person is at enmity with his neighbor he must forgive him and be reconciled with him before his being admitted to a participation in the Sacraments.

These five cases, my dear brethren, are the most ordinary in which confessors are obliged to refuse or to defer Absolution to their penitents. There are many other cases demanding refusal or delay of Absolution, but we can reduce them to the five we have explained.

6. This conduct of refusal or delay of Absolution is wise, necessary, and indispensable, as well for the confessor as for the penitent. It is so for the confessor, since the Church commands him to act thus, under pain of rendering himself guilty of a profanation of the Sacrament; and it is so for the penitent, since it prevents him from rendering himself guilty of a sacrilege, and

in order to procure his amendment and conversion. Besides, this conduct is very conformable to right reason. For, is it not evident that one ought not to give the Sacraments to those whom he has grounds to judge are unworthy of them?

Now, in order that the confessor may judge that his penitent deserves to be absolved, he must see in him signs of a sincere repentance for his sins, and of a firm resolution of not committing them again. And this is what he does not see in those who are found in the cases I have proposed; consequently, he cannot, and ought not, absolve them till they place themselves in the dispositions that give him cause to judge that they are in a state to be absolved.

Let us hear with fear what the fathers of the Church say on this point: "He," says St. Isadore, cited in the canons, "who continues to commit sins of which he would make us believe he repents, is not a penitent but a mocker." "To do penance," says St. Gregory the Great, "is to weep over past sins, and to cease to commit new ones, for which it would be needful to weep anew." Tertulian adds: "Where there is no amendment, the penance is necessarily false, null, and useless," and St. John Chrysostom calls that penance where there appears no change, "a mask, and a ghost of penance." Judge now, my brethren, whether the ministers of this Sacrament are wrong in taking precautions and in demanding of their penitents before absolving them signs of a change and conversion.

SECOND PART

ASH WEDNESDAY.

FIRST SERMON: THE EVIL OF PUTTING BACK REPENTANCE—FIRST PART.

"Now, therefore, saith the Lord: 'Be converted to Me with all your heart in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning, and rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn to the Lord, your God.'"—Joel ii, 12-13.

I.

1. Introduction. In those stirring words of the prophet Joel the Church today calls upon her children in every land to lay aside their accustomed pleasures and amusements, and to enter with heart and soul on the penitential exercises of the Lenten Season. Their conversion must be thorough and sincere, and this is to be shown not by merely receiving on their foreheads the holy ashes, or by other exterior signs of mourning, but by the rending of their hearts with a sincere and heartfelt contrition.

2. The appeal of the Church contained in the stirring words of the prophet is appropriate and just, since she witnesses the insincerity of the conversion of many of her children who on this day receive the holy ashes on their foreheads as a sign of mourning, yet they are scarcely ever on other occasions seen to take part in her devotions, or even to fulfil their ordinary Christian duties. As those false penitents are encouraged to persevere in their irregularities by the foolish hope of a death-bed repentance, the following discourse is addressed to them, viz., on the evil of delaying to be converted to God by a sincere repentance for their past sins.

II.

1. And, first, the chief fallacy by which the devil deceives sinners and retains them in their habits of sin is dispelled, viz., the presumptuous confidence in God's mercy, and it is so by the three following arguments: 1st. God is merciful, but only to those who fear Him, not to those who abuse His mercy. 2nd. If on some rare occasions His mercy is extended to sinners on their death-bed, this is in order to show that the state of hardened sinners differs from that of the damned, that, whereas, the latter are fixed in perpetual enmity towards Him, the former

while life remains are in a state in which it is still possible to obtain repentance and forgiveness. 3d. God's mercy may urge Him to cut off sinners in their sins, in order that others may be deterred from sin by the example of their impenitence.

2. We are not to be too confident in a seeming death-bed repentance, as it may be insincere, as experience shows. A death-bed repentance is a last resource on the part of the inveterate sinner; a death-bed absolution is a last resource on the part of the priest who is called on to attend such; and last resources are proverbially of doubtful efficacy.

3. The fearful example of the seeming death-bed repentance of Antiochus, the persecutor of the Jews, of whom Scripture relates that he died in his sins; and why? Because his repentance was not sincere, and it was too long delayed.

4. Appeal.

I.

Appeal.

1. In those stirring words the prophet Joel called upon the whole people of God to arise and do penance for their sins. And in the same moving accents the Church today invites her children in every land to lay aside their accustomed pleasures and amusements and enter with heart and soul on the holy exercises and practices of the Lenten season.

"Be converted to the Lord," she says to us, "in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning"; "in fasting" and in the performance of other exterior works of penance; "in weeping" over our sins which have so offended our God; and "in mourning" over the evils they have brought on us in the loss of God's grace and friendship, and in the threat of eternal punishment.

That conversion must, moreover, be thorough and sincere, and this is shown, not by merely receiving on our foreheads the holy ashes, or by the putting on of other exterior signs of mourning, but by the rending of

our hearts with sincere and humble contrition. We must "rend our hearts, and not our garments, and be truly converted to our God."

2. Those raking words of the prophet are appropriate and just. For, what is it that we ordinarily see on this, the first and opening day of Lent?

Do we not see crowds present themselves to receive on their foreheads the holy ashes who are scarcely ever seen again to take part in the devotions of the Church; who do not go to Mass on Sundays even, or receive the Sacraments? Like logs felled by the axe of the woodsman which put forth a few scraggy shoots at the return of spring though they are dead and destined for the fire, those degenerate souls, though they lie prone in sin and habits of vice, feel, nevertheless, within them the stirring of the Lenten graces, but as to any act of Christian life which requires vital effort they are insensible and dead.

To such I appeal this evening and say: "Arise! Delay not to be converted to the Lord in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning, and rend your hearts, and not your garments, and be truly converted to the Lord." Know you not that it is the extreme of folly to expose yourselves to the danger of utter ruin by living on in sin with the hope of attaining salvation in the latter end by a death-bed conversion? This is the foolish hope of many—a hope that leads them blindfolded to destruction, and it is in order to dissipate that foolish hope that I purpose to address you this evening on this important subject, namely:

II.

The Evil of Delaying to Be Converted to God by a Sincere Repentance for Past Sins.

1. And, first of all, let me dispel the chief fallacy by which the devil deceives sinners and retains them in their habit of sin, namely, a presumptuous confidence in God's mercy.

"God is merciful," they say to themselves, "and He will not take me short in the latter end. I will have my fling, therefore, while the opportunity is given me. Later on, perhaps on my death-bed, I will be converted and will begin to serve Him."

"God is merciful," you tell me, my dear brother or sister. "God is above all things merciful," I repeat. "The mercies of the Lord are spread over all His works." God is merciful, but have you reflected on what Scripture tells us, that "His mercy is towards them that fear Him?"

God is merciful, and His mercy has been extended, we know, on some rare occasions even to sinners on their death-bed. And in this way, praises to His Holy Name, as well as in others, He would show us that the state of hardened sinners differs from that of the damned; that, whereas, the latter are fixed in perpetual enmity towards Him, the former, while life remains, are in a state in which it is still possible to obtain repentance and forgiveness.

God is merciful, but has it ever occurred to you that this very mercy may urge Him to destroy you? For is His mercy to be exercised in favor of men in general, or only in favor of you in particular? If in favor of men in general, may it not urge Him to cut you off in

your sins in order that others may be deterred from evil ways by the example of your impenitence?

2. "But do we not see," you will tell me, "that those who lead indifferent lives are generally converted in the end, and when they are struck down by their last illness, do they not make their peace with God and die happily?"

Be not too confident, I pray you, in the efficacy of that repentance. I was of your way of thinking for a long time. I had great hopes—I had a consoling confidence in those apparently extraordinary manifestations of the Divine mercy towards inveterate sinners. And when I heard of a poor sinner's having received the Last Sacraments with signs of repentance, there welled up from my heart a fervent "thanks be to God" for that at last the poor soul was safe.

Alas! I have to acknowledge that a long experience with those in dangerous illnesses has given a rude shock to my credulity, and has led me to apprehend that what often appear to be true sentiments of sorrow and repentance are only the outcome of a servile fear of God's chastisements, and when once the terror of approaching death has been removed from such by symptoms of returning health, all the old dispositions of the inveterate sinner revive with them.

Have I not seen those who received the Last Sacraments apparently with the best dispositions, afterwards acknowledge that even then they concealed their sins in Confession and received the Last Sacraments sacrilegiously? Have I not attended those who in dangerous, and what were thought fatal illnesses, showed all the ordinary, aye, and some of the extraordinary signs of repentance, and who when once the immediate

danger of death was passed, seemed as bent on their old ways of sin as they were before? Would you guarantee that the repentance of those was sincere—was a repentance acceptable to God?

No, brethren, a death-bed repentance is a last resource on the part of the inveterate sinner. A death-bed absolution is often a last resource on the part of the priest who is called on to attend such; and, as all medical men will tell you, last resources are of very doubtful efficacy.

3. What repentance could appear more sincere than that of the tyrant, Antiochus, of whom we read in Scripture? This example alone ought to make the most hardened tremble. From the moment that he is attacked with his fatal malady he turns to God and prays. He confesses openly his crimes. He acknowledges that he has done wrong in making war against the Almighty; that it is very just that mortal man should subject himself to his God, and that he well deserved to suffer for his past sins. He promises not only to restore what he had unjustly taken, but, moreover, to give great alms; to adorn the temple of Jerusalem; to contribute abundantly from his revenues for the service of God. He protests that if he should recover from his malady he would embrace the religion of the Jews, and that he would go through the whole world publishing the goodness and mercy of God. What more could he do? And, yet, who could have believed it? His repentance was not sufficient to obtain the pardon he so eagerly sought. Holy Scripture assures us that this sinner died in his sins. And why, if not because his repentance was not sincere, and because it was too long delayed?

4. Let not then the devil deceive you, either by representing to you in a fallacious manner God's mercy, or by the seeming conversion of others on their death-bed. Eternal salvation is too vital a question for us all to be left to the uncertainties of a death-bed repentance.

Take heed rather to the words of Scripture warning you to "defer not to be converted to the Lord, and put it not off from day to day; for God's wrath shall rise on a sudden and in the time of vengeance He will destroy thee."

SECOND SERMON: THE EVIL OF PUTTING BACK REPENTANCE—SECOND PART.

I.

1. The hope of those who live on in sin with the expectation of somehow attaining salvation in the end contradicts reason.

1st. Because such a hope is grievously injurious to God's honor and an insolent presumption on His goodness. 2d. Because if the sinner is unable to break the chains of his evil habits while in health and in the full possession of all his mental and moral faculties, much less will he be able to do so when enfeebled by sickness and torture.

2. It contradicts the teaching of Scripture which warns us, saying: "Defer not to be converted," etc.

From warnings the Holy Writings go on to the most fearful threats, as when they say that "like unfruitful trees they will be cut down and cast into the fire"; that "like tares that grow up amid the good grain they will at death be bound up in bundles and cast into the fire of hell"; that "the death of sinners is most miserable," etc. The simile of the Psalmist, where he compares impenitent sinners to hungry dogs which, after spending the day gadding abroad, come back at evening to their master's house in search of food which is denied them. Thus the Lord will deride them in the end. "He will scatter them in His power, and strike them down in their pride." "You seek the Lord, and you shall die in your sins."

II.

1. It contradicts the examples of Scripture, where of all the impious whose deaths it records, it mentions only one who was

converted at the end of his life. More terrible still, it records the bad thief's impenitent end, though he died by the Saviour's side on Calvary, and at the moment when the Sacraments of the Church received all their efficacy.

2. The hope of impenitent sinners contradicts the experience of all past ages, as Church history testifies, as well as the teachings of the Fathers of the Church. The sayings of St. Augustine, St. Bernard, St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyprian, St. Jerome. The solemn warning of St. Jerome on his death-bed.

3. Appeal.

I.

1. In my last discourse I showed you how fallacious is the hope of those who live on in sin with the presumptuous confidence of obtaining God's mercy in the end, or, who, because they see the apparent conversion of others on their death-bed, trust in a like grace's being accorded themselves.

Let me today continue the same subject of the evil of putting back repentance.

And I say that the hope of those who live on in sin with the expectation of dying happily in the end, *contradicts reason. It contradicts the teaching and example of Scripture; it contradicts all experience, as well as the teaching of the doctors and fathers of the church.*

It contradicts reason, I say. Is it reasonable to expect that God Who has been outraged by the sinner all his life and Who now in the hour of His mercy offers him reconciliation and pardon; is it reasonable that He should be ready at the time and in the circumstances dictated by him, the offender, to come to terms with him and grant him His triumphant grace, when now that sinner ceases to offend Him only because he is unable to offend Him any longer?

Is it reasonable that after forging strong chains of evil habits, and binding yourself with them all your life

when health and vigor of mind and will were yours, you should expect to be able to break them all at once on your death-bed, when you will be a poor, miserable, broken man, racked with torture of body and mind, and torn by a thousand cares that will bear down on you with the impetuosity of a tumultuous rabble? "Alas! the folly of sinners," cries out St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, in her last illness, "to leave their conversion to their death-bed, when I am scarcely able to pronounce the name of Jesus."

Is it reasonable to expect that after leaning on the side of sin and self-indulgence all your life, you will at length come to die on the side of grace and salvation? What does Scripture say? "On whatever side the tree leans, there shall it fall." Brethren, you are that tree. If you lean during life on the side of good works and virtues, you shall fall, you shall die, on the side of mercy and salvation. But if, on the contrary, your tendency all your life be on the side of vice and evil, on the side of evil and impenitence you shall surely fall.

2. But what says Holy Scripture, that authentic record of God's dealings with men? What say the Inspired Books with regard to the end of habitual sinners? What grounds do they give for hope of a death-bed repentance?

O brethren, here it is that all I have said up to this receives the most terrible confirmation. And, first of all, let us hear the warnings of God to us through the medium of the Inspired Pages. "Defer not," He says, "to be converted to the Lord and put it not off from day to day; for His wrath shall rise on a sudden, and in the time of vengeance He will destroy thee." "I will come," He says, "as a thief in the night." "Be ye always ready; for, at the hour you think not the Son of Man will come" to summon your soul to judgment.

"Be ye always ready." From warnings He goes on to threats, and tells the sinner plainly that, like an unfruitful tree, he will be cut down and cast into the fire of Divine vengeance. He threatens unfaithful Catholics that, like the tares that grow up among the good corn, they will be bound up in bundles and cast into the fire of hell. After that He tells of the miserable end that awaits sinners hereafter. "The death of sinners," of those who continue in their sins to the end, "is most wretched." "They shall go down of a sudden to destruction." "They shall be cast forth as the dust which the wind drives from the face of the earth." "God shall wash His hands in the blood of sinners." "The land shall be soaked with their blood, and the ground shall be sodden with the fat of the wicked." "They shall be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire where their worm dieth not, and their fire shall not be extinguished."

The Psalmist compares death-bed penitents to hungry dogs which, after lounging about all day, return to their master's house at evening in search of food. "They shall return at evening, and suffer hunger like dogs, and shall go around about the city." Yes, after having during life tried to fill themselves with the garbage of every by-way and alley of sin, they will return at the evening of life to seek the bread of forgiveness from the Lord, and to get entrance to the city of mercy. But forgiveness shall not be given them; for, mark what follows: "But Thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them; Thou shalt scatter them in Thy power and strike them down in their pride." How well these passages accord with others addressed to the sinner in the days of his obstinacy: "You shall call upon Me and I will not hear. You have despised My counsel and have neglected My reprehensions. I will

also laugh at your destruction and will mock when that shall come upon you which you feared."

O sinners, where is the ground of your hope, and what confidence does God give you of escape from the "wrath to come?" Let me ring once again in your ears the words of Truth itself: "You shall seek the Lord, and you shall die in your sins." If you now "despise His counsel, and neglect His reprehensions," He, on that day, "will laugh at your destruction, and will mock you when that shall come upon you which you feared."

II.

1. If from the words of Scripture we turn to the examples there given us, the fate that awaits daring evil-doers comes out in stronger relief than ever. Is it not astonishing that of all the impious whose deaths are recorded in the Bible and who are very numerous, there is mention of only one who was converted in the last moments of his life, and that was the good thief?

What is even more astonishing, and what comes more home to those who, because they are Catholics and because priests are at hand, plume themselves with the hope of repentance in the latter end, is this, that at the time when grace was poured out more abundantly than at any other, there died by the side of the Saviour one whose body we may say was bespattered with the Blood of the Redemption, an impenitent soul. Yes, the bad thief died in his sins by the riven side of the Saviour and was damned. His impenitent soul went down from the cross and was buried in hell.

After this will you, because you are a Catholic, forsooth, and because the Sacrament of Reconciliation is at hand, plume yourself with hope and presumptuously de-

fer your conversion to later on? If, then, deceived by the devil, you have up to now refused to make your peace with God in the hope that the Sacraments will snatch you from hell in the latter end, let the dreadful fate of the bad thief, who was condemned to hell in the very hour that the Sacraments received all their efficacy, open your eyes to the ruin that threatens you. "Delay not, therefore, to be converted to the Lord, and put it not off from day to day; for, His wrath shall rise on a sudden and in the time of vengeance He will destroy you."

2. The hope of unrepentant sinners contradicts all experience, as well as the teaching of the doctors and fathers of the Church. It contradicts the experience of all past ages. And now, as every age is filled with examples of the terrible deaths of inveterate sinners, I shall confine myself to the relation of some that I myself have met with.

(The writer could here narrate the circumstances of the terrible deaths of several unrepentant sinners that occurred in his own experience, and he concludes):

O brethren, take warning in time from the sad end of others. "Be ye always ready." "Put not off your conversion from day to day," lest the vengeance of God overtake you in your sins, and you die the death of the reprobate. Are you a drunkard, a company keeper, an impure man or woman, a rogue, an envious person, a revengeful soul? Then, I say to you: lay aside your sinful ways and do penance, that you may escape the wrath to come. Bring forth during this Lenten season fruits worthy of penance. Leave not your soul to the uncertainties of a death-bed repentance.

What are the teachings of the fathers of the Church with regard to such a repentance? "It is insufficient,"

says St. Augustine. "It is presumptuous," says St. Bernard. "It is ridiculous," "It is absurd," says St. John Chrysostom. "It is morally impossible," says the great Bishop of Carthage, St. Cyprian. "What sort of a penance must that be," argues the sarcastic St. Jerome, "which a man resorts to only because he has now no longer to live?"

But, not to weary you with quotations from the fathers, let me conclude with the saying of the same uncompromising champion of true doctrine, this luminous doctor of the Church, this incomparable interpreter of Holy Scripture, himself, perhaps, the most wonderful example of a penitential life in all church history. This great saint being on his deathbed, his disciples came to beseech him to speak to them before leaving them, some words of edification. The dying saint, turning towards them with terror pictured on his countenance, spoke to them in these terms: "My dear children; do penance during your life, and wait not till the hour of death to be converted; for, *I am persuaded, and I have learned by a long experience, that of ten thousand persons whose life has always been bad, scarcely one can be found who has obtained pardon of his sins in the end.*" This is the testimony of this famous father of the desert, of a dying saint, of a saint who is about to appear before his God.

3. O dearly beloved sinners, be wise in time. Delude not yourselves with deceitful confidence. "Put not off your conversion from day to day." Contemn the suggestions of the deceiver who would lead you blindfolded to your ruin. Open your eyes to the dangers of your position. You play upon the crisp of a volcano. You shall be swallowed up in its gurgling depths. Trust not to the seeming health of your body which is friable as

the potter's clay. Repent this day of your sins. Carry within you a conscience which tells you that you are in the friendship of God, and the fear of death will not sadden you. All your days will be spent in the delight which God's grace imparts; and you will be happy in the friendship of God in time and in eternity.

FEAST OF THE COMPASSION.

THE SORROWS OF MARY ON CALVARY.

"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, His Mother, and His Mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen. When Jesus therefore had seen His Mother and the disciple standing whom He loved, He saith to His Mother: 'Woman, behold thy son.' After that, He saith to the disciple: 'Behold thy Mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her to his own."—John xix, 24.

I.

1. Introduction. It was fitting that the Church should institute a feast to commemorate the Sorrows of Mary, and that that feast should be assigned a place in the calendar immediately before Holy Week.

2. The cause and meaning of Mary's sufferings on Calvary. 1st, to complete the offering of her Son which she had commenced on the day of the Presentation in the Temple. She presented Him in sacrifice to the Father, as God and as Man: as her offering and the offering of humanity for the redemption of the world. 2nd, Mary as conscious sacrificer, in her own name and on the part of humanity offered those acts of adorations, faith, hatred of sin, love, and supplication, which were due from the participators in the Sacrifice.

The crucifixion being the great "Sacrifice for sin," she, representing humanity, had to offer the greatest intensity of merely human suffering in union with the Divine-Human Passion of her Son, and thereby she sanctified all our afflictions and united them with those of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

3. Furthermore, the Crucifixion was not only the "Sacrifice for sin"; it was also the great vital act which gave us our Redeemer as the Second Adam, the moral Head of the human race, a prerogative forfeited by the first Adam. Mary on the same occasion was made the second Eve, "the Mother of all the living"; and, hence, on the occasion she bore her share of the penalty allotted to women: "in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children."

These functions assigned to Mary at the Crucifixion explain her attitude on the occasion, "Beneath the Cross of Jesus stood Mary, His mother." And He said to John: "Behold thy Mother."

II.

1. Mary's sorrows as contrasted with the sorrows of the afflicted mothers of the Old Testament.

2. Appeal to remember always the sorrows of Mary on our behalf, and to make this remembrance the groundwork of our love and gratitude to her and of our unshaken trust in her powerful protection.

I.

Their Cause and Meaning.

1. It was a beautiful thought of the Church to institute a feast to commemorate the Sorrows of Mary, and to assign to that feast a place in the calendar immediately before Holy Week, the great week which is wholly given over to the contemplation of the sufferings of our Lord, Jesus Christ. For, what more appropriate than that the sufferings of the Mother should be associated in the prayers and ceremonies of the Church with those of her Divine Son, since, actually, and before God they are inseparable?

I shall be in keeping with the spirit of the Church, therefore, in inviting you at this season to the contemplation of those sorrows.

2. And, first of all, I will ask you to consider their cause and meaning: for they are not the mere sorrows of an earthly mother grieving over the death of an only child. Rather, they were ordained by God from all eternity as part of the penalty to be paid for sin, and were to mingle with the sufferings of her Son in that great tragedy which was to redeem the world.

The above passage from the Gospel, referring to the part taken by Mary on Calvary, says, that "beneath the cross of Jesus stood Mary, His Mother." Would it not occur to one, in reading that passage of the Gospel, that

the posture described is not the one usually associated with a mourner who is affected with merely human grief? On the contrary, were Mary affected with merely human grief her conduct would be somewhat like that of Agar, of whom it is said that, seeing her son dying of thirst in the desert, "she sat over against him a great way off . . . and she lifted up her voice and wept." (Gen. xxi, 16.) She would, I say, have manifested her grief, as mothers usually do, by lamentation, fainting, and tears. But Mary, though her soul is filled with grief, stands apparently immovable beneath the Cross.

She stood by the cross silent; outwardly impassive, as fulfilling a part assigned her by Providence in that great mystery. For, she alone knew what was really taking place. "To others," says Bellord, in his "Meditations on Christian dogma," "the crucifixion was variously either the execution of a disturber of the peace, or the martyrdom of a holy prophet, the triumph of wickedness in high places, or the natural failing of a noble enterprise. Mary alone recognized that the Sufferer was God, and that this was the accomplishment of the Divine plan for the redemption of mankind."

But Mary had, as I have said, an important office to fulfil on Calvary. She was there to complete the offering of her Son which she had commenced on the day of His Presentation in the Temple. "She presented Him in sacrifice to the Father, as her God and the Son of Man; as her offering, and the offering of humanity for the Redemption of the world." "Mary so loved the world as to give for our Redemption her only Son." (St. Bonaventure.)

As, moreover, through deficiency of faith and knowledge no other person present was able to partake *con-*

sciously in the act of sacrifice there offered, it was the duty of the Blessed Virgin to represent the whole of mankind and to offer those acts of adoration, faith, hatred of sin, love, and supplication, which were due from the participators in the Sacrifice.

At the same time she had to offer the greatest intensity of merely human suffering, in union with the Divine-Human Passion of her Son; and thereby she sanctified all our afflictions and united them with those of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

3. Furthermore, the Crucifixion was not only the "Sacrifice for sin"; it was also the new birth of mankind to the spiritual life, frustrated by the sin of Adam, and deferred to the day of Calvary. It was the great vital act that completed the work of God in the world. Mary was necessarily present and bore a share in it. This was part of her life-work. The Nativity and the Crucifixion were the one action. The Sacrifice of the Cross began at Bethlehem. The new birth of mankind was completed on Calvary. Mary was concerned in both, and on each occasion she was present as Mother of the human race.

This, our Lord declared in His word to St. John from the Cross: "behold thy Mother." This word of the dying Saviour had a spiritual signification and concerned us all. The Blessed Virgin was declared to be, spiritually, the "Mother of all the living," and on this occasion she bore her share of the penalty allotted to woman: "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children."

II.

Their Intensity.

1. But, have we any conception of the depth of those mysterious sorrows that filled the heart of our Blessed

Mother as she begot us to the spiritual life, when standing by the Cross on Calvary? Oh, picture them you earthly mothers, who have ever experienced a mother's sorrow. Picture them all you who have ever wept by the death-bed of a fond parent or a tender child.

In the great drama of human history, examples are found of those to whom Divine Providence apportioned sorrows and trials greater by far than those usually allotted to mortals. Such were those mothers spoken of in the Old Testament whose afflictions are commemorated in the office of the feast of the "Compassion of the Blessed Virgin." But what one of those afflicted mothers had sorrows to be compared to those borne by the Blessed Virgin during the hours of the Passion? And this is what is intimated to us by the words of the prophet applied to our Blessed Lady in the office spoken of: "O all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be sorrow, like unto my sorrow."

Agar, we know, is afflicted at the sight of her son Ishmael perishing of thirst in the desert; "and seeing him die," says Scripture, "she cast him under a tree, and went her way, and sat over against him a great way off; for, she said: 'I will not see the boy die,' . . . and she lifted up her voice and wept." Mary, on the contrary, in fulfilment of her double office of co-redemptress of mankind, and "Mother of all the living," had to accompany her Divine Son through all the stages of His Passion from Gethsemani to Calvary, and see Him die in thirst and agony on the Cross.

The Mother of Tobias goes every morning to the hill-top to scan the horizon for the sight of the return of her lost son, and she cries and weeps: "Wo, wo is me, my son; why did we send thee to go to a strange coun-

try, the light of our eyes and the staff of our old age: the comfort of our life, and the hope of our posterity?" But the son of so much love will return conducted by an angel to the embrace of his mother; whereas, Mary is permitted only to receive in her lap the corpse of her Beloved, and kiss the bloody marks of the wounds of His thorn-crowned brow.

Noemi returns desolate from the land of Moab, where she buried her husband and two strong sons; and she weeps and says: "Call me no more Noemi, that is, beautiful; but call me Mara; that is, bitter; for, the Almighty hath quite filled me with bitterness. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me back empty." More desolate Mary, as she returns from the sepulcher where she had laid her Son and her all.

Respha, the wife of Saul, sees her two sons "crucified upon the hill before the Lord"; "and she took haircloth, and spread it under her upon the rock from the beginning of the harvest to the rainy season, and she suffered not the birds to tear them by day, or the beasts by night." Mary has to see the inmost soul of her Jesus torn in His agony of Gethsemani by the wild beasts of hell. She will witness on the morrow the "comeliest of the sons of men," lacerated with whips and scourges till there be not a sound spot in Him.

The heroic mother of the Maccabees dies seven times over in the martyrdom of her seven brave sons slain before her face. The lance and the nails crash one by one through the tender heart of the Virgin, as she sees the executioners nail her Jesus on the Cross and sees His sacred side opened by the soldier's spear; for, as St. Bernard says: "only by passing through her soul could they touch the body of her Son."

"A voice in Rama was heard," at the martyrdom of the holy Innocents, "lamentations and great mourning. Rachel bewails her children and would not be comforted, because they are not." Mary laments over the Child of her love tottering under the Cross on the way to Calvary, harried by soldiers more ruthless than those by whom their babes were done to death. Oh, well can the Virgin Mother, on Calvary, say, with Sephora, the afflicted wife of Moses: "A Spouse of blood art Thou to me," my Son; for Thou hast associated me entirely in Thy sufferings by which Thou redeemest the world; and in me is fulfilled the prophecy of God to Eve: "In sorrow thou shall bring forth children," for, only by sacrificing Thee, my First-born, do I become the spiritual Mother of all mankind.

2. May we remember always the sorrows of Mary on Calvary, through which she begot us to God, and became the Co-Redemptress of our race; and may this remembrance fill us with love and gratitude to her, and be the groundwork of our trust in that powerful protection she exercises in our behalf in heaven where she pleads with her Divine Son for the salvation of us all.

HOLY THURSDAY.

JESUS IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT AS OUR FRIEND, AS OUR FATHER, AND AS OUR GOD.

I.

1. Introduction. A sense of desolation at seeing Himself deserted by His disciples and left in utter abandonment by the whole world, one of the bitterest experiences of our Lord in His Passion. Somewhat of the desolateness that pressed upon the Saviour on that occasion may be said to haunt Him still in His Sacramental life on our altars. The abandonment and neglect in which our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist is left by His people.

The purpose of this discourse is to appeal to souls to cultivate a tender devotion to our Lord under the Sacramental species. This devotion due to Him by reason of His threefold relation to us in the Eucharist as our Friend, as our Father, and as our God.

2. He showed Himself as the most tender friend of men during His public mission. But nowhere was the deep love of the Saviour for us more strikingly shown than in the institution of the Most Holy Eucharist. Vivid realization of the Saviour's conduct towards the disciples in the Supper Chamber. This same love He manifests to all in His Sacramental life on our altars. Invitation to approach Him with confidence in dereliction, and sorrow, and want.

II.

3. The appellation of Father He can lay claim to on the two-fold title of Creation and Redemption. In the quality of most solicitous Father, He not only nourishes our souls with grace and His holy Word, but He Himself becomes the food of our souls in Holy Communion.

The unexampled generosity of Jesus Christ in giving Himself to be the food of our famished souls personated in Scripture under the figure of the "pelican of the wilderness." This unheard of nourishment promised us in John vi. throughout.

III.

4. When God of old dwelt in the camp of Israel in the desert. He ruled over His people as the "God of Armies"; later on when Solomon built the temple of Jerusalem, the same God demanded fealty of His people as their King. Similarly

does our Lord, in the Blessed Eucharist, though He veils His Majesty under the appearances of Bread and Wine, claim of us at all times worship as our God. This prescribed in the royal and stately ceremonial of Church worship.

Rebuke to people for their sluggishness and heedlessness in God's presence. The ineffable worship paid to the same God-Saviour in Heaven, as testified by St. John in the Apocalypse.

5. Recapitulation. Reward.

I.

As Our Friend.

1. One of the bitterest things felt by our blessed Lord in His Passion was a sense of desolation at seeing Himself deserted by His disciples and left in utter abandonment by the whole world. And this sense of desolation was made the more oppressive by the recollection of man's unfeeling selfishness and ingratitude. Of all those crowds who had followed Him in the days of His prosperity, of all those sick who were benefited by His generosity and miraculous power, of all those disciples who only a little while before sat down with Him at the table of the Last Supper, not one was found to stand by Him in His Agony and pour a word of sympathy into His jaded and tortured soul. Well, indeed, could He say, in the words of the prophet: "I have trodden the winepress alone. I looked around for one that would grieve together with Me and there was none; and for one that would comfort Me in My sorrows, and I found none."

Somewhat of the desolateness that pressed upon the Saviour in His Passion may be said to haunt Him still in His Sacramental life on our altars. Of course, on a great solemnity like this, when grace has touched our hearts, we are all here. We all testify our faith in the Real Presence by coming to adore Him, to lay our

wants before Him, and to partake of His bounty. Like those crowds whom long ago He fed miraculously in the desert we throng around His altar today. Like them, too, we are willing for the moment to make Him the King in our hearts. But, come to our churches, say on an ordinary week day, and behold the abandonment! Scarcely one throughout the livelong hours of the day or night to watch before the altar, to say a word to Him, to while away with Him the tedium of the time. Outside all is animation. On all sides are boisterous laughter and unceasing talk on worldly topics and events. Hundreds pass up and down heedlessly by the Church's open doors. Many, even of those who live only a few paces from God's house, never think of paying Him a visit, save on the Sunday, to say a short half-hour's distracted prayer during the Mass commanded them by the Church. Only a few faithful ones care to sympathize with our Lord in His abandonment. Only a few care to condole with Him over the sins of men. Oh, truly can He complain, as He looks out from the tabernacle over the deserted Church: "I looked around for souls that would keep company with Me in My abandonment, and there were scarcely one, and for those that would grieve together with Me over the ingratitude of My people, and I found scarcely one."

Allow me, then, dearly beloved, to appeal to you to cultivate a tender devotion towards Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Eucharist—a devotion which will be shown not only by your faithful assistance at daily Mass when possible, and at Benediction, and by frequent Communion, but, especially, by the frequency of your visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and by thinking and praying often to Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of

His Love. This devotion is due to our Lord by reason of His three-fold relation with us in the Eucharist, as our Friend, as our Father, and as our God. And, first, as our Friend:

2. Throughout His whole life on earth Jesus Christ showed Himself the constant and tender friend of men. To see this you have only to consider Him in all His relations with them. Be they rich, or be they poor; be they virtuous or malignant, the Lord extends to them the same generous love. Whether you consider Him amid the throng of followers who press around Him on the shores of the sea of Galilee, or at Capharnaum, where, we are told, the multitudes gathered from all parts of Judea to get cured of their infirmities; whether you contemplate Him at Sichem, or Jericho, or Siloe, or Bethsaida, or whether you picture Him by the open grave of Lazarus, at which the Saviour wept; or pardoning the Magdalen; or raising from the dead the widow's sons of Naim; or feeding the starving multitudes in the desert; or, finally, amid the humiliations and sorrows of Calvary, at all times Jesus shows Himself the tender and bounteous friend of men.

But nowhere were the deep depths of the Saviour's love for men more strikingly shown than in the institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

Transport yourself in spirit to that Supper Chamber in Jerusalem where Jesus on that first Holy Thursday evening instituted the Sacrament of His Love. Hear the words of tender charity He speaks to the twelve seated familiarly around Him, one of whom He permits to recline upon His Sacred Breast: "I will not now call you servants," He says, "for the servant knoweth not what His master doeth; but you were with Me from the

beginning, and I have hidden nothing from you." "You call me, Lord, and Master, and you say well, for, so I am; but, yet, I have been among you as one that ministereth to you." He compares His love for them with that of mortals, and He says: "Greater love than this no man hath, that he should lay down his life for his friends." And to prove His love by deeds, He rises from the Supper Table; He girds Himself with a towel; and with His Divine hands He washes the disciples' feet.

Finally, as a departing friend is wont to bequeath to the friends he leaves behind him gifts as a last testimony of his love; so, the Saviour takes bread, (His countenance transfigured as on Thabor and all the love of the God-head shining in Him), blesses It, and gives to His disciples, saying: "Take ye and eat; This is My Body That shall be nailed for you to the Cross. And, in like manner, taking wine, He blesses and distributes it, saying: "Drink ye all of This, for This is the Chalice of the New Testament in My Blood, that very Blood that shall be shed for you, and for all mankind, unto the remission of sin." And as if he ardently desires to live in the remembrance of those He loves, He commands them, saying: "Do ye this likewise, daily, for a commemoration of Me. For, as often as you shall eat this Bread, and drink this Chalice, ye shall show the death of the Lord until He come."

This love, which Jesus Christ testified for the disciples at Its institution, He still manifests to all in the Sacrament of the Altar. For our sakes He still lives with us in a state of humiliation. For our sakes He strips Himself of His Majesty. He veils His glory under the appearances of bread and wine that the sight

of His greatness may not terrify us. He takes up His dwelling-place in our midst. He shares the poverty of His people, and He loves to see us pour our sorrows into His sacred breast.

Oh, then, do you feel a sense of desolation in life as if your existence were to no purpose? Do you feel a sense of loneliness when, as the years pass along, you see the companions of your youth fall one by one at your side? Are you made to feel the inconstancy of human friendship when those who loved you formerly have turned their affections elsewhere? Ah, then, seek the society of that constant Friend Who is with you always to help you, and Who says, "My delights are to be among the children of men."

Do the cares of life press upon you? Does your heart bleed under the burden of a secret, yet, overwhelming, sorrow? Do you long for some sweet comforter to solace you in life? Jesus is all that and more, as He invites you, "Come to me all you that labor and are heavily burdened, and I will refresh you."

Does your soul languish with hunger and poverty, and do you long to taste of the sweets of the spiritual life? You can go to the tabernacle and "become inebriated with the plenty of God's house, and drink of the torrent of His pleasures."

Have your natural protectors deserted you? Are your parents no longer with you to watch over and provide for you? Then think of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. He is there, not only our tenderest of friends, but also our most loving and provident of fathers.

II.

As Our Father.

3. The appellation of Father, our Lord can lay claim to, not only on the title of Creation, for "He made us and not we ourselves," but also on that of Redemption.

When the human race had forfeited through sin the privilege of sonship of God, and had become the slaves of the devil, the Divine Word yearned for them in their degradation with the love of an agonizing parent. And this love caused Him to leave the abode of His glory and come down to earth and take the form of Man in order that as Man He might purchase us to life by the sacrifice of His Life upon the Cross.

Become, thus, the Father of the human race, and the "Second Adam" by the new title of Redemption, He is filled with the bowels of tenderness towards us, and, as a consequence, he watches over us with a loving and paternal providence. And how does this best of Fathers provide for us in our spiritual needs?

In addition to the ordinary food of our souls, supernatural grace, and His holy Word, the loving inventions of our God have provided us with a new species of nourishment in His own Sacred Flesh and Blood. And it is this unexampled generosity of Jesus Christ in giving Himself to us in the Holy Eucharist that is celebrated in Scripture, where He is compared to the pelican of the wilderness. "I am made," says the Psalmist, speaking in the person of the future Messias, "I am made as the pelican of the wilderness." Now, there was no bird more famed in story in early times than the pelican of the wilderness. And it was said of it that when it perceived its little ones bitten by a snake, it

tried to revive them by feeding them with its own life blood which it drew from its open breast.

Ah, dearly beloved, we, all of us, the offspring of the good God, were bitten by the infernal serpent, and the poison of hell rankled in our veins. And Jesus Christ, the true "pelican of the wilderness," out of His generosity and goodness, feeds our famishing and poisoned souls with His own Flesh and Blood. How beautifully does our blessed Lord convey this to us in that lovely discourse in which He promises the institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, "I am the Living Bread come down from heaven, . . . and if anyone eat of this Bread he shall live forever. And the Bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world. . . . He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath life everlasting, and I will raise him up on the last day. For, My Flesh is meat, indeed, and My Blood is drink, indeed. He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and as I live by the Father; so, he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me."—Jn. vi, 51-58.

III.

As Our God.

4. But let me go on to say that Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist is our God, and, as such, He demands the adoration of our minds and the fealty of our wills. When of old God dwelt in the camp of Israel, He made His presence felt by the most astounding wonders. He ruled over His people as the God of Armies, under Whom were marshaled the six hundred thousand fighting men of Israel, and claimed their fealty as a King. At His command the camp was moved, or the multitudes

pitched their tents. Moses was but as the general-in-chief of His army, who transmitted His commands to the Israelites, and arranged them in order of battle. The pillar of a cloud that hung over the tabernacle in the desert was as the banner of the Great King, and it became, at times, a fire that scorched and consumed His enemies. When, later on, Solomon built a temple in Jerusalem, the Majesty of God filled the holy place, and His fire from heaven consumed the sacrifices therein. Three times a year this God of Israel assembled the Jews from every quarter of the world to worship Him in His holy temple, and never did they dare to appear before Him without the tribute of gifts and sacrifices. The Jews when they prayed, whether on their own native hillsides or under the skies of a foreign clime, were taught to turn themselves towards the holy temple in which they knew their God dwelt. In a word, God demanded, whether in the camp, or in the field; in the workshop, or on the way; the God of Israel demanded fealty as a Sovereign, and reverence as the Lord of all.

Somewhat similarly does our Lord dwell with us in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. He claims of us at all times worship as our God. And though love has veiled His Majesty, and though He appears in this Sacrament under the humble species of bread and wine; still, as Christians, must we never forget that our God dwells in our midst as a King seated on His throne. The Church is His palace. The tabernacle is His audience chamber. The altar is His mercy seat. There, too, is He daily presented to the Father as the Mediator and Redeemer of His people. At times He has Himself enthroned in solemn state during the Exposition, as if to give public audience to His subjects and to receive their acts of reverence, while clouds of incense are offered before

Him, symbolic of His Godhead. Or, He makes a royal progress in all the pomp of lights and banners and with the acclamation of vocal and instrumental strains. Or, He confers on us His solemn Benediction as a pledge of His royal beneficence and His bounteous help in our needs. Thus acts He as our God. Why, then, are we so sluggish in our worship, and why do we live so heedless of our God in the Sacrament of His love?

Oh, if Jesus Christ took away the veils that screen His Majesty, and we were permitted to see this Man-God Who reigns over us in the Blessed Eucharist, how would we not humiliate ourselves before Him? Could we see Him, as did St. John in that famous vision vouchsafed him when on the isle of Pathmos, surrounded by myriads of blessed spirits who cast their crowns before Him and sing unceasingly the hosannas of His praise! Could we see the light of glory that surrounds Him, and the Divine Majesty in all its splendor! But, does not our faith tell us it is so, and that Jesus Christ dwells amongst us as our God?

Let us then stir up our faith and devotion towards our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Let us come to Him to keep Him company as our dearest and most faithful Friend, trust in Him as in the tenderest and most provident of Fathers, worship Him as our God.

Thus will the Sacrament of the Eucharist be to us what it was intended to be by Its Divine Founder, our solace amidst the trials of life; our earthly anticipation of the beatitude of heaven; and the unceasing object of our worship, till we arrive at the abode of glory, where we shall be permitted to join the beatified in singing the eternal praises of the Lamb, to Whom be honor, praise and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

GOOD FRIDAY.

THE PASSION: FIRST PART.

"O all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow. . . . For the Lord hath made me desolate, wasted with sorrow all the day long. . . . Therefore do I weep, and my eyes run down with water, because the Comforter, the relief of my soul, is far from me. My children are desolate, because the enemy hath prevailed. Lam. i, 12, 16.

I.

The Agony in the Garden.

1. Introduction—The grief of the Church on Good Friday, a parallel to the desolation of Jeremias on the occasion of the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of the Jews by Nebuchodonzor. We also as devoted children should take part in the sorrow of the Church, our Mother. This, the purpose of the review this evening of the Passion of our Lord.

2. Narrative of our Saviour's entry into the Garden of Gethsemani. Contemplation of the spiritual causes of His long-drawn-out agony, and its harrowing effects on Him. His agonizing cry. The sweat of Blood, and His pathetic prayer to the Father.

3. Jacob's grief over the supposed death of Joseph by a wild beast.

4, 5, 6. The threefold beastly cause of the Saviour's Passion and death contemplated—amplification. Our sins had part in the sufferings and death of our Lord, and so had our ingratitude, and the little fruit we have drawn from this source of grace. St. Thomas's judgment on the adequacy of the Saviour's sufferings to pay the entire debt due for sin.

I.

The Agony in the Garden.

1. In these mournful words, taken from the "Lamentations of Jeremias," does the Church pour forth her sorrow over the death of Jesus Christ. By such language does she relieve herself in the Funeral Office of the Tenebrae, which for the last three evenings you

have heard chanted—applying to herself the desolateness and the widowhood which the prophet had spoken of concerning the city of his tears. And with reason may she weep and fill the earth with her lamentations in these days when she is widowed, indeed, by the death of her beloved Spouse. And if Jerusalem is desolate and mourns over the loss of her children who are carried into captivity, how may not our Mother be oppressed with sorrow? For, behold, her Lord is removed from her and she is desolate! Her "Holy of Holies" is violated, and nothing remains to her but the Cross, the Funeral Candles, and the Winding Sheet.

And we, O beloved brethren, if we be true children of the Church, should also weep and be filled with grief in these days at the sight of the death of our beloved Lord. For, was it not for our sakes that He went through the ordeal of the Passion? And I know that this it is that has brought you together here tonight, that you may contemplate the sufferings of Jesus Christ and join the Church in weeping over the sorrows heaped upon Him on this day of awful, of unheard-of crime.

Let us then review with sympathetic hearts the history of His most bitter Passion. Let us lay open the fountains of our affections, and be not ashamed to pour forth our tears before God. For, this is pleasing to Him in the New Law, as it was in the Old, where He commanded that that man's name be blotted out of the Book of Life who on the solemn Day of Expiation joined not in the general mourning.

. . . . . .

2. The evening is now advanced when Jesus Christ leaves the Supper Chamber with His disciples. He passes silently through the deserted streets of Jerusa-

lem, and directs His steps towards a well-known quarter leading to the Mount of Olives. Calmly, deliberately, He enters the Garden of Gethsemani, which is situated on the side of the mountain that overlooks the city, taking with Him His favorite disciples, Peter, and James, and John. As He advances He begins to feel His soul overcharged with a sorrow, which presses upon Him and weighs Him to the earth. Yet does He go before His disciples and pushes on alone into the midst of the garden, and there, stricken to the ground with sorrow, He prays prostrate on the earth. O Christian soul, approach in spirit and contemplate your Saviour as there beaten flat upon the ground He writhes in His agony; contemplate that soul, the delight of the blessed Trinity, now covered with humiliation and reproach, as it is engaged in deadly conflict with the powers of hell. Behold your Saviour offer His back to the stroke of His Father's justice which we had earned for Him by our sins. Yes, O Lord, we are the culprits! we, not Thou, deserved to suffer! We it was that provoked Thy Father's anger! But Thou wouldst take upon Thyself our sin, and bear the penalty of our transgressions. As the Eternal Father declares by the mouth of His Prophet: "For the sins of My people have I stricken Him."

Here it was that our Divine Lord united in His Body and in His Soul all that torments the most cruel, all that death the most sorrowful, all that man could suffer, the most painful. He delivered Himself to a paroxysm of fear and grief capable of taking away His life, and His imagination pictured at once the most afflicting objects—the treason of a perfidious apostle; the desertion of His friends; the outrages, the cruelties,

the atrocities of a ferocious mob; the ignominies, the insults of the most unjust tribunals, the most unworthy judges; the derisions, the reproaches, the barbarities, the impieties of the soldiers; the crying calumnies, the frightful injustices of the priests; the monstrous preference of all the people; the scourges, thorns, nails, cross; all, all are present to Him in that awful hour; all are felt by Him; all press upon that tenderest of hearts and most loving of souls. Our Lord, about to succumb under so enormous a weight of anguish, cannot, will not, dissemble. "My soul," He cries out, "is sorrowful even unto death!" What wonder is it that under the pressure of so terrible a torture of mind and body the most Precious Blood rushes out from His Divine Heart, and is sent with violence through every pore of His Body, and gathering in great drops drenches His garments, and trickles to the ground on which He lies? What wonder if in His agony He cries to His Eternal Father: "My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me!" Oh, excess of love! excess of sorrow and agony of the soul!

3. The patriarch Jacob, as we are told, when he beheld the many-colored tunic of his favorite son stained with blood, cried out in the anguish of his heart: "Woe is me! some evil beast hath devoured my son Joseph"; and rending his garments he covered himself with sackcloth, saying: "I will go down in sorrow to the grave, because a wild beast hath eaten him."

O beloved brethren, look, look upon your Saviour prostrate in His agony. As yet no lash has torn His sacred flesh; no thorn has pierced His venerated brow; no lance has opened His sacred side, and yet, behold Him weltering in His Blood. Look upon that seamless gar-

ment clotted with gore, and say, some evil beast hath cruelly torn Him. That beast can be none other than the three-fold cause of His bitter agony—the sins of men which bear down upon Him, loading Him with sorrow—the ingratitude of men, most of whom will not acknowledge His love, nor believe all that He has done for them,—and the small fruit of His most bitter passion.

4. 1st. The sins of men—at that hour were accumulated all the iniquities, all the crimes that have degraded the human race from the first sin of Adam, down to the last that shall have been committed, all, all in their manifold deformity were heaped upon the innocent soul of Jesus Christ. He Who had been sinless, undefiled, born of the Immaculate Virgin, the all pure, all holy Son of God, now finds Himself charged with the accumulated sins of men. All the sins of paganism; all the Sins of Christians; all the impurities of Sodom; all the blasphemies and curses given forth from the lips of impious men; all the injustices; all the murders; all the profanations of holy things; even the unspeakable sacrilege that was about to be accomplished whereby the Son of God is to be murdered by His own! yes, even our sins were laid upon Him in that awful hour, each of which appeared individually in all its hideousness before the pure gaze of the Saviour. Oh, awful and terrifying thought! Even we were there, each with his quota of sins to hurl them on the prostrate form of the Son of God!

5. The ingratitude of men. One of the keenest pangs felt by a sympathetic heart is that which comes from the ingratitude of those on whom it has bestowed many kindnesses; and this is the keener when the good turn has been effected at great personal inconvenience, and

the person for whom it was done was the less deserving of the favor. This again was a source of immense anguish to the heart of Jesus when He saw that men for whom He was about to bear such unheard of sufferings would prove ungrateful: shall I say ungrateful? would despise His love; would ally themselves with His fiercest enemies; would pursue Him and His with relentless hostility; would use the very good which He conferred to injure Him the more; and that even those who professed to be His friends and firm adherents would prove traitors of the blackest dye; would practise dissimilation and treachery, even when they would make it appear that they serve Him best. This, my brethren, is what even good men cannot endure.

Shall we, shall we, I say, clear ourselves of this charge of ingratitude; we who profess, nay, glory in the name of Christians; we who daily enjoy the boon conferred upon us by the Death of Christ; we who refuse to shed a tear or a drop of sweat for Him Whose Body was suffused with a sweat of Blood for us?

6. The little fruit of His Passion—this, finally, was a thing that caused infinite sorrow to the soul of Jesus in that death-agony of Gethsemani. We are all willing to bear labor and pain when we hope that our labor will be crowned with success, and that the reward will be proportionate to the care expended in acquiring it. This it is which sweetens toil and makes us perform the hardest things cheerfully. But here Jesus suffers ineffable torments, and yet He knows that after all His life of labor, and the shedding of His Blood, by far the greater part of the human race will be damned eternally.

All the fathers of the Church unite in telling us that

the sufferings which our Lord endured are incomprehensible, and that His Passion is a mystery of humiliation and sorrow which surpasses all created intelligence to comprehend. "He suffered sorrow and confusion in a supreme degree," says St. Thomas. All is excess in the Passion of Jesus; excess of malice and ingratitude of the Jews whom He had enriched with all kinds of favors; excess of cruelty in His murderers, who lay upon Him unheard of tortures; excess of humiliation in the outrages they inflict upon Him, and in the derision with which they charge Him; excess of sadness to which He delivers Himself, and which now causes the Blood to ooze out through all the pores of His body. "Know," says St. Thomas, "that the greatness of His sorrow was proportioned to the punishment which the sins of all men had merited; and this because the Saviour wished to destroy sin, not only by the force of His power, but also according to the measure of strict justice. Thus, He wished that there be a perfect equality between the debt and its payment; between sin and its punishment; in so much that His sufferings were so great as Man that they equalled, they surpassed even, all the punishment that Divine Justice had a right to demand after the remission of the eternal punishment of hell, which mortal sin had merited."

What, then, must have been the anguish that wrung the Heart of the Saviour, when, after such unheard of sufferings, He knew that by far the greater part of the human race would be not only damned, but would suffer a more terrible damnation through their own fault by reason of His most bitter Passion.

What wonder! what wonder, I say, that in that

convulsive outburst of anguish the Divine Heart of Jesus should force out through every pore the sacred tide of His most Precious Blood? What wonder that the olive roots should drink of the crimson stream flowing from the Saviour, when He is about to shed it all so profusely, so prodigally, so recklessly, I should say, for wretched, ungrateful, ungenerous, hard-hearted, ever sinful man?

THE PASSION: SECOND PART.

1. The scene of the betrayal. Hardness and impenitence of Judas. Outrages of the rabble described, and the indignities suffered by the meek Saviour. Those outrages portrayed in prophecy.

2. Jesus defenseless in the court of Caiphas. His meekness portrayed. His unjust trial before the most unworthy judges. Hypocrisy and mock grief of the high priest. Unspeakable outrages in the hall of Caiphas. "I am a worm and no man."

3. Humiliating spectacle of the cowardice of the Apostles. The Saviour "treads the wine-press alone."

The Apprehension and Trial.

1. But hark! What noise is that as of a multitude coming through the olives? What lamps are those and torches profaning the darkness of the night, the solitude of the place? What confused sounds are those uttered by that group of armed men, led by one who appears to be acquainted with the place, and who seems to be the leader of the band? Listen, he gives the word of order, "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is He: hold Him fast." "O Judas!" highly-favored disciple; "dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" Judas, raised to the dignity of bishop, of apostle! Judas, gifted with the power of working mir-

acles! Judas, privileged to eat of the Flesh of the Man-God! Judas, has it come to this with thee, that thou dost betray Me, thy Lord and Master, to My mortal enemies? Judas, dost thou employ in thy act of treachery that sign which is the token of the closest intimacy, of the most endearing friendship? O God! what heart so insensible as not to be melted by so sweet, so loving a complaint? But Judas is implacable. O God! to what depths of degradation and hard-heartedness cannot man descend when mastered by even one overruling passion!

And now the whole multitude of that infuriate rabble close in upon Jesus with swords and clubs as if he were a robber whom they come to apprehend. They seize Him; they collar Him; they beat Him; they drag Him along the ground; they kick Him while prostrate; they strike Him with their mailed fists—those cruel soldiers of the Temple, and still more inhuman servants of the high priests. Oh, how much is the dignity of the Son of God wounded by their unworthy treatment! We behold that tender Body, the object of the adorations of the angels, bruised and livid from kicks and blows. Well mayest Thou cry out in the language of the Prophet: "Many dogs have surrounded me. The council of the malignant have besieged me. They have opened their mouths against me like a lion ravening and roaring. My strength is dried up like a potshread. My tongue hath cleaved to my jaws; and Thou hast brought me down into the dust of death."

2. It is now midnight when Jesus, worn out with fatigue and violence, reaches the court of the high priest. Contemplate your Saviour in this new theater of His Passion. Hitherto He had been set at naught

by a brutal rabble; but now He is to receive fresh insults from those who are placed in authority; and this is the more grievous injury, inasmuch as innocence is the more outraged by ill-treatment received from those who have a reputation for virtue, and who are naturally looked upon as the protectors of the injured, than from a wicked crowd, without order, or head, or judgment, guided by passion alone.

Jesus is therefore led before the Great Council of the Jews to be tried for a capital offense. "Like a lamb led to the slaughter" He stands before His judge, opening not His mouth to reply to the calumnies they speak against Him. "And the chief priests and all the Council," says the Gospel narrative, "sought for evidence against Jesus that they might put Him to death, and they found none. For many bore false witness against Him, and their evidence was not agreeing." Then the high priest, astonished at His meekness and wishing to convict Him, asked of Him, saying: "Answerest Thou nothing to the charges that are made against Thee by these men?" "And He held His peace." And, again, the high priest asked Him, and said: "Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the blessed God!" And Jesus answered: "Thou hast said it; Yes, I am." This was what that impious man desired. He wanted a pretext to condemn Him and bring Him to execution. Then the hypocrite, rending his garments, cried out: "What need have we of further witnesses?" "You have heard," says he to his associates, "You have heard the blasphemy. What think you? Who all condemned Him to be worthy of death?"

Then, indeed, is our Saviour subjected to new outrages. There was a court or hall in the palace of the

high priest. Into the midst of this Jesus was led to be delivered to the brutality of the servants and soldiers. Then did they spit in that Divine Face on which angels gaze in fear. Then "did they buffet Him and strike His cheek." Then did they blindfold Him and set Him at naught, striking Him with the palms of their hands, and saying: "Prophesy who it was that struck Thee." Then did they pull His hair and beard, and bow the knee before Him in mockery. Thus was Jesus outraged all the night long. How truly did David prophesy of Him a thousand years before: "All they that saw me laughed me to scorn. They have spoken with the lips and wagged the head. But I am a worm, and no man. the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people." And Isaias, when he said: "I have given my body to the strikers, and my cheeks to them that plucked them. I have not turned away my face from them that rebuked me and spat upon me."

3. But it might be asked: Where was now the faithful band of apostles and disciples who accompanied Him in His journeyings and preachings? Where, the beloved John, who reclined on the bosom of his Master in the Supper-Chamber only a few hours before? Where the ardent Peter, who declared that even if all the others were to abandon Him he would die defending the person of his Master? Where is James, "the brother of the Lord," or that other James who had ambitioned to sit at the right hand of Christ in heaven? Where all the other disciples who followed the fortunes of their Master in the days of His prosperity?

Look at yonder fire blazing in the middle of the court. There is Peter sitting in the midst of the serv-

ants of the high priest. Yes, the fervor of the ardent disciple has cooled. See, the night is cold. He warms himself. He who boasted that even if he were to die with his Master, he would not deny Him, see him now turn pale at the inquiry of a servant maid, and curse and swear that he never knew Him!

Look in another quarter of the apartment, in a remote corner. There is the beloved John, grieving indeed at the outrages heaped upon his beloved Master, but weakly disguising himself for fear of the Jews. The others, where are they? Dispersed in every quarter, scattered like sheep without a shepherd. At the moment when Jesus was apprehended in the garden all dispersed; all saved themselves by flight, leaving their Master in the hands of His captors. Oh, how inconstant is the heart of man! Well, again did the Prophet declare of Him: "I looked for one that would comfort Me, and there was none; and for one that would grieve together with Me, and I found none."

THE PASSION: THIRD PART.

I.

1. Jesus led before the tribunal of Pontius Pilate. The causes which led to this move considered, together with the charges, the qualities of the accusers, the witnesses, the judge.

2. Meekness of the accused. Awful invocation of the Jews by the chiefs and people. The unworthy preference. At the court of Herod.

II.

Scourging the punishment of a slave. The humane law of Deuteronomy violated. "He was wounded for our iniquities; He was bruised for our sins."

III.

The crowning with thorns contemplated. Our reparation by our tears.

I.

The Trial.

1. And now the morning dawns. Straightway those aged conspirators who had remained up late the night before hold counsel together against Jesus. They are not wearied. They seek not the indulgence given to advanced age. They are upon business and they are in earnest.

Jesus, after a night of insults and derision, is led to the justice hall of Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor. The power over the life of citizens is taken away from the Great Council of the Jews. But the life of Jesus Christ they will have, even though by it they acknowledge the hated yoke of Rome. What is patriotism? What is dignity? What is the honor of their state and nation to men goaded on to fury by the passion of jealousy and hatred implacable? Blood, His Blood they will have. And even though the walls of their city and temple should fall upon them, still will they persevere in their attempt.

To the justice hall of Pilate, therefore, they lead Jesus bound like a malefactor. And here new torments await Him. Being come to the tribunal of Pontius Pilate, He is put upon His trial as if He were a culprit. Oh, what a new indignity to the holy Lamb of God! The Innocent tried by the guilty! The Judge of the living and the dead questioned by one of His own creatures! And Oh, heavens! on what a charge? By what accusers? On what testimony? Because He went about doing good to all. Because He dared to assert Who He was and call Himself the Son of God. And who were those righteous men who are so zealous for the majesty of God? Hypocritical Pharisees, corruptors of the Divine Word, and still

more iniquitous priests and doctors of the law. And these are the men who now rise up in their zeal for the law and accuse the Son of God of being its violator.

And on what testimony? On that of false witnesses, of men bribed to swear away His life, of perjurers, the vilest scum of that great and sinful city; bribed for their perjury by the very men whose duty it was as the preservers of public morality, and as guardians of the law, to visit with the severest punishments those guilty of calling God to witness to a lie. By the sentence of such a judge; at the instigation of such accusers; on the testimony of such witnesses, is Jesus doomed to death.

2. And, how does He demean Himself before such a tribunal of violated justice? "Like a lamb led to the slaughter," He opened not His mouth in self-defense. And when the judge, after examining the case, says: "I find no cause in Him," then does the storm of passion burst from His accusers. "Unless He were a malefactor we would not have brought Him before you!" "Away with Him!" "Crucify Him!" "Punish Him as a slave! for, we, the representatives of His race and nation, disown Him as one unworthy of society with us." "If the sentence be unjust, then, let His blood be upon us and upon our children!" And when the judge would still try to save Him by putting Him on a par with the murderer, Barabbas, saying: "Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus, that is called Christ?" Then did the whole multitude, instigated by the chief priests and the ancients, cry out: "Release to us Barabbas; but this man, let Him be crucified!"

From the tribunal of Pilate Jesus is led to that of Herod. Again is He dragged through the streets of Jerusalem amidst the execrations of the populace. Then

again did the streets of the city resound with their blasphemies, those streets that but a few days before rang with the hosannas of His praise. Herod was glad to have an opportunity of seeing Him, for he had heard many reports about His power of working miracles, and he was desirous of feasting his curiosity by having some wonders worked in his presence. And when Jesus was unwilling to satisfy him, he, together with his courtiers, set Him at naught, putting on Him a faded rag of a garment and saluting Him as a mock king, and as a fool to be held of no account.

II.

The Scourging.

From the court of Herod, back again is Jesus led to that of Pilate, who, as the Gospel says, "scourged Him." What manner of scourging that was, we learn as well from the tradition of the Church, as from the revelations made to chosen souls, and from the words of the Gospels. Now, the punishment of scourging, like that of crucifixion, was imposed only on slaves. By the Roman laws no lash should ever dare to violate the back of a Roman citizen. Our Lord, being a native of Judea, enjoyed the privilege of citizenship granted by Rome to the subject states. Therefore, no lash by right should ever touch His flesh. And even with slaves a limit was put to the cruelty of their masters by a law forbidding anyone to get more than forty strokes.

What do we behold? In the palace of the Roman Governor there was a cohort of soldiers, the roughest, the most disorderly, the most corrupt of the soldiers of pagan Rome. To these savages is Jesus delivered to be scourged. Close on six thousand lashes do they lay upon Him, those stalwart, brawny men! O brethren, contem-

plate your Saviour in the court of Pilate, tied to a pillar, naked, with ropes and bands, as if He were a dangerous madman! Behold His tender Body writhing under the terrible blows dealt Him by those leaded whips, wielded by strong men, with hearts more unfeeling than the marble column to which He is bound! Behold His Blood spurting from His wounds, torn, gaping, lacerated, from their blows! Contemplate that beautiful figure, "the comeliest among the sons of men," now reduced to one purple mass of gore and lacerated flesh! See His bones, His ribs, His joints, carved to a skeleton of the flesh that once clothed them! See the whips sodden with His flesh! Behold Him weltering in the pool of His most Precious Blood, and cry out with the prophet: "Truly, He has borne our iniquities, and carried our sorrows! He was wounded for our iniquities! He was bruised for our sins!"

III.

The Crowning With Thorns.

Nor is this all. No, suffering has not yet reached its height. His Body is indeed one bleeding wound "from the crown of His head to the sole of His foot." But, yet, it is exterior. Pain is felt only through the medium of the nerves which in time perhaps become paralyzed through violence of agony. No, pain must be brought to bear upon the seat of sensation itself. The very skull, nay, the brain itself must be assailed. What then does the cruelty of men devise against their God? Instigated, made ingenious by the devil himself, his persecutors discover a new mode of torment as yet unknown to tyrants, and one which, like the Cross, will become, to the end of time, the ensign of the followers of Christ.

These inhuman barbarians, in the revelry of their cruelty, plat a crown of thorns, strong, sharp, and long, and press it on the sacred brow of our Lord, Jesus Christ; press it, I say, not with their naked hands, for, they fear to get pricked by its sharp spines; but with instruments—with their shields and mailed gauntlets; press it, I say, till the thorns pierce the skin and are buried in the flesh; press it till they pierce through the flesh and are fastened in the skull; press it till the Blood gushes out, and He is blinded with Its flow, and He is maddened from the pain! Oh, unheard of cruelty! Was ever heard of, was ever conceived such savage treatment! O dear Lord, what do they do to Thee? With Thy eyes blinded with Thy own Blood; with Thy hair and beard one clotted mass of gore; with Thy ears and neck besmeared; with Thy sacred temples pierced with the thorns of Thy mock crown; with Thy mangled body covered with a purple garment, derisive sign of mock royalty; sitting upon the throne of Thy humiliation, they bow the knee before Thee as the King of their diversion. They serve Thee with cuffs and spittle, striking the thorns of Thy crown home into Thy skull with Thy scepter of a reed! O Jesus, permit us to make some reparation to Thee tonight by our tears and sorrow, by our compassion, and by our resolution to join league with sin, Thy enemy no more!

THE PASSION: FOURTH PART.

I.

Exhausted condition of Jesus. "I am ready to do Thy will, O God."

The New Isaac. "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me."

II.

1. The long looked for moment! Crowning outrage of mankind! Nature weeps at the Crucifixion of its God!

2. Diabolical malice of Our Lord's enemies. "Father, forgive them!"

3. Scene of Calvary described. Jesus abandoned, even by His Eternal Father. He would "tread the winepress alone."

4. Mary the co-redemptress of our race. The Second Eve. Her fidelity during the Passion.

5. "It is consummated!" The Conqueror of death and hell. Trophies of victory.

Sin the entire cause of the Passion and death of our Saviour. The Jews, the soldiers, Caiphas, Pilate, Herod; all were our executioners. Were it needful, Christ's charity would impel Him to die again for us. Final resolve.

I.

The Carrying of the Cross.

But, let us hasten on to that crowning point of humiliation, and outrage, and prodigality of love. Jesus is now weary to death with several hours of the most worrying torment of body and mind. His Soul, laden with sorrow and anguish; His Body, a weltering mass of wounds and gore; all His members relaxed from a sleepless night and loss of Blood; His dignity wounded by insults, and vile usage, and shameful exposure; His honor wounded by derision and the insolence of His tormentors. And, now, they lay upon that wounded back, the Cross—a beam of timber, huge, rough, and heavy. "Jesus went therefore," says the Gospel narrative, "carrying His own Cross." For the fifth time He is led through the streets of Jerusalem amid the derision of the populace.

We are told by those whose piety led them to inquire about the Passion of our Saviour that the distance from the hall of Pilate to the summit of Calvary is over half a mile. For such a distance, then, did the exhausted

frame of our Lord bear along the burden of His Cross. It might be asked how had the Saviour strength to carry that awkward beam, fifteen feet in length? But do we not know that all the Fathers of the Church unite in telling us that this was done only by a miracle of endurance. And this the Psalmist had foretold of Him, when he said: "Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldst not; holocausts and sin offerings do not please Thee; but, a Body, specially fitted up for suffering Thou hast given Me. Then, said I, 'behold I am ready to do Thy will, O God.'" Yes, it was only by His Father's sustaining power that He was enabled to undertake this fresh load of ignominy and suffering. And here all the fountains of affliction of that nature fitted for affliction are once again set in motion.

Three times, with a crash and a shock that shivered all His nerves, did the Saviour fall under His heavy load. Three times did the lash of the executioner awake Him from His swoon, to have His ears outraged anew by their blasphemies. Once, indeed, did He stand to speak. It was to the women of Jerusalem. His words preserved to us in the history of His Passion, betray His compassionate, loving heart, and the Divine nobility of His soul. "Daughters of Jerusalem," said He, "weep not over Me, for all this I suffer of My own free will and choice; but weep for yourselves and for those dear little ones that shall have to bear the burden of their fathers' crimes."

II.

The Crucifixion.

1. And now at last they reach the summit of Calvary. O dearest Jesus, now indeed is the hour arrived, long

looked for with longing expectation! Now indeed shall be consummated Thy Baptism so long desired, wherein Thou wilt be washed with the Blood and Water issuing from Thy sacred side.

Being come therefore to Mount Calvary, they strip Him violently of His garments, which, sealed with the Sacred Blood cause Him infinite pain, as the executioners drag together with them the torn flesh from His mangled Body. They throw Him on the ground and dig His hands and feet through with rough, blunt, iron spikes, which tearing through nerve and fiber, send a very paroxysm of anguish to His inmost soul. And now they raise the Cross aloft into the air, those rough, cruel men. High between heaven and earth they lift it, bearing its precious burden swaying to and fro, and writhing in His agony. And with an awful thud they send it home deep into the earth, tearing open the wounds of His hands and feet. Oh, incredible depth of the wickedness of man! The Son of God had come to earth to crown us with favors from heaven, and behold man has hung Him upon a tree of infamy! Be not surprised that the sun should refuse to give his light; or, that the sea should lash its waves against the shore, desiring to swallow up the human race in vengeance for its outraged God. Be not surprised that the rocks should split in anguish at the hard-heartedness of man.

2. And how demean themselves the authors of this unheard of outrage? "Va! Thou that savest others, come now let us see Thee save Thyself!" "Come down now from the Cross on which we have laid Thee, and we will believe in Thee!" "Thou that wouldst destroy the temple and in three days build it up again, save Thy own life now if Thou art able!" "Va! Thou that wouldst

break the Sabbath, call upon Thy God and He will save Thee, perhaps, from the death that we have brought Thee to!"

And, what answer does the Son of God make to their derisions? What imprecations does He in His indignation invoke upon His savage persecutors? What chastisements does He call upon His Father to inflict upon them? "Father," He says, "forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

3. For three hours, amid the darkness of the sun, and the anger of the sea, and the rending of the rocks, with His naked body extended, and His gaping wounds exposed to the biting blast of March, did the Lord of heaven and earth hang writhing on the Cross. For so long a time did the soldiers keep guard around the hill. For so long a time did His tormentors like wolves howl about in fury. Jesus was long silent on the Cross, His eyes closed in prayer, His head bent upon His chest, when on a sudden, that manly voice breaks forth once more, a reminder of those days when He preached upon the hillsides. Listen to the startling words He utters: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" And, here again we come upon another chasm of suffering into which Jesus Christ was cast during the period of His Passion.

No matter how great the Sufferer's agony may be; no matter what torture of mind or body He has; yet, a soothing balm is poured upon His wounds by the care and sympathy of one beloved. Our Lord has suffered in His body all that nature, helped by the miraculous aid from His Father, could endure. He has suffered in His soul what all the human race could not endure. All men seem to be His torturers. His friends who had supped

together with Him; all, all have abandoned Him. He is stripped of every shred, and naked as He came into the world. He is deprived of His reputation; of His honor. He is maligned; He is slandered. But now we learn something more, and that is that not even His Eternal Father shows Him the favor of His countenance. No, that love which prompted Him to undertake the task of our Redemption induces Him to persevere to the end alone and unsustained. Not even the consolation of sympathy does He receive from His Father. No, not even from His own Divine nature. For, by an extraordinary miracle His Soul is shut out from the bliss of the Beatific Vision, which, as Son of the Most High, He, by right, should enjoy, so that with truth He may say, as Isaias had foretold of Him: "I have trodden the wine press alone. I looked around and there was none to help; I sought and there was none to aid."

4. Yet was He not entirely unsustained? Was there not even a ray of sympathy to cheer Him in that supreme hour of His dereliction? Was there no one found in heaven above, or on earth beneath, to cast a glance of compassion on the agonizing Saviour?

The Gospel takes care to note that even then there was one that followed Him through all the stages of His Passion; one heart that throbbed in unison with His, and that, as far as creature was capable, sympathized in every agonizing thrill. "Beneath the Cross," says the Gospel, "stood Mary, the Mother of Jesus." O Mother of Jesus, our Mother also! Co-redemptress of our race! the one sustaining sympathizer of the Saviour in His agony! Thou alone amongst creatures wert found worthy to wade with thy Son through the sea of His most bitter Passion! Thee alone did

the Father consider worthy to share the honor of His triumph!

In every stage of the Passion was His Blessed Mother present; if not bodily, at least in sympathetic sorrow. In Gethsemani, during His sweat of Blood, she it was that administered to Him the cup of consolation in His agony. In the hall of Caiphas she felt every bitter taunt inflicted on her Son. In the streets of Jerusalem every reproach uttered by the people pierced her heart as "a sword of sorrow." In Pilate's hall every lash, every blow, every thorn of His crown was to her a pang of keenest anguish. On the way to Calvary the load of the Cross pressed upon her shoulders. And now, during the three hours of His agony, she is still present, offering Him the balm of companionship in sorrow. O dearest Mother! permit us tonight to offer to thee the tribute of our gratitude for remembering us on Calvary. For then we were present to thee, each one in his necessities.

5. The third hour of the agony of Jesus on His Cross is nearing to its close. One by one the numbers of that multitude return to the city, wearied with taunting Him to death. The soldiers still keep guard around the hill, and darkness encompasses the earth. Suddenly the Saviour raises Himself upon His Cross, utters a loud and piercing cry: "It is consummated!" bows again His sacred head, and dies. That cry sent forth by the Saviour on the Cross resounds throughout the universe. It pierces through the depths of the abyss. It rings from end to end along the caverns of hell. By it the inmates of the infernal regions are put into confusion. Its princes, become insolent for the hour, are thrown back by it in rage and despair,

It ascends beyond the clouds. It is borne as a trumpet blast into the ears of the Most High. And ere its echoes faint upon Judea's gale, the bolts of Heaven's gates are drawn. Its portals are thrown open wide. The shackles fall from off men's limbs. The human race is free. Redemption is accomplished.

Epilogue.

Dearly beloved brethren, you have followed me with patience through this long and doleful narrative. I make no apology for my stay, for I know that the Passion of our Lord is to you, especially on this most solemn night, a subject on which you love to dwell. If the sufferings of your Saviour have awakened in your breast a pang of grief; if a tear has coursed your cheek, or a flush of indignation has mantled on your brow, remember that sin did it all. Yes, we—our sins—did it all. We it was that brought this accumulation of sorrow on our God. The Jews, the soldiers, Caiphas, Herod, Pilate—all were only our executioners. We have judged Him worthy of death. We have brought Him to His end. And if there was one soul, the least amongst us here tonight, unredeemed, against whom Heaven's gates were barred, most willingly would our loving Lord act the drama of His Passion once again; most gladly would He bear it all to save that soul from hell. Go tonight in silence to your homes and think on all that you have heard and seen. Think on what has brought Him to His death; and let each one ask himself the question, "Will I ever commit mortal sin again?"

THE SEVEN WORDS.*

1. My brethren, we are going to assist at the last moments of the Divine Victim Whose holy soul is revealed to us during this station. Ascend with me the hill of Calvary. Jesus lying on the instrument of His punishment is nailed to it, and immediately this sinister cry resounds: "Lift it." The Cross is raised and mounts slowly, slowly, under the efforts of the executioners. The crowd, breathless, looks on, and is silent. The holy women call down in a low voice the vengeance of heaven. The Magdalen sobs and laments. Mary contemplates in the midst of her tears her well-beloved Son. Jesus prays in His heart for those whose crimes He expiates and the Cross mounts always, ever. At last it stands erect! It falls heavily into the hole dug to receive it, and Jesus, Whose hands and feet are torn by this jolt, puts forth a plaintive cry, to which responds in the distance on the hill whereon the Temple is built the flourish of sacred trumpets, announcing the immolation of the Paschal lamb. Many of those who are there recall the words of St. John the Baptist: "Behold, the Lamb of God": "Behold Him Who taketh away the sins of the world," and a sorrowful commiseration caused the tears to flow from their eyes. Behold Him, the Lamb foretold, the Divine Martyr for our iniquities! From His brow, from His hands, from His feet, the Blood streams even to the ground. His head becomes languid, leans upon His breast. His mild glance seeks out His friends. His arms are extended. It is the surrender which says to God: "Accept me." It is the mercy which says to the sinner: "Come to me." It is the generous love which says to the entire world: "I give all for you."

Jesus crucified speaks to us by His attitude; but it seems to me that I see Him open His bleeding lips. He wishes to tell us something before he dies. Listen to Him. The word of a man who is about to die is sacred. How much more that of a God Who immolates Himself for us. It is the last outcry of sentiments of the holy soul of Jesus. I am going to follow, that I may represent it to you, the gospel order; but you will be able to make accord each of the words of the dying Saviour with each of the sentiments on which we meditate together.

*I insert here this beautiful exposition of the "Seven Words" by Pere Monsabre, though the piece can scarcely be designated a sermon, and this I do, as well, on account of the devotion of the people to the theme; as in order that it may serve as a help to priests who may be called on to give the exposition of the words.

I.

Around the Cross on which Jesus dies, the Pharisees, His enemies, are gathered. Their Victim should have the right to die in peace. This is a consolation that is accorded to the worst of criminals. But to Him every consolation must be refused. They heap on Him ironies, contempt, insolent defiance, curses. What reply are You going to make to them, O my Jesus? One of those terrible words which devote the tormentors of innocence to the anger of Heaven? No, it is a word of mercy and pardon that falls from Your lips. "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." Profound mystery! These men are more than ever riveted to their iniquity, and this is the moment that the Son of God chooses to teach us that they can still be pardoned. Did they profit of their pardon? I don't wish to know; but I ask You, O dear Saviour, to set forth Your word of mercy near our hearts. Ask for us pardon of our Father Who is in Heaven; for, we are more guilty than those who insulted You on Calvary. They knew Your innocence; but they did not yet well see in Your Sacred Presence the glorious Master Whom we must adore.

We are ignorant of nothing. We know that in offending You we offend the greatest of Masters, the best of Fathers, the tenderest of Friends. We know this, and we commit sin. We are hateful criminals. O Father, O Master, O Friend! pardon us and touch our hearts, so that we may forgive as You those who have disowned us, despised us, injured us, cursed us, persecuted us; all those who are infinitely less guilty towards us than we are towards You.

II.

The Son of God has spoken. He has expressed the sentiments of mercy with which His holy soul is filled, and, behold, He gives us a new testimony of it.

There are by the Cross on which the Saviour dies two thieves who are about to die. They in the beginning cast injuries upon Him in union with His enemies. But one of them, touched suddenly by grace, addressed to His companion this just reproach: "Why insult the innocent? We suffer the penalties due to our crimes, but He has done no evil." And addressing himself to Jesus: "Remember me, Lord, when You enter into Your kingdom." Poor, miserable wretch! thou hast done well in striking at the gate of a Heart filled with an infinite mercy for sinners. This mercy replies to thee by a sweet and consoling promise. "Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise."

And can this be true? Can man have still hope when he has filled his life with the abomination of sin? Yes! Christians, yes! There is such an abundant Redemption in the sorrows of the Saviour, and so much mercy in His Sacred Heart, that He wishes to receive us at the eleventh hour, as at the first, and to give to our tardy penance the reward promised to His elect.

There are, perhaps, among you some who carry the load of ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty years of forgetfulness, of ingratitude, of miseries and crimes. Let them awake today at the sweet accents of a Heart that chants the promise of an infinite goodness. Let them not be terrified at the wounds of their criminal souls. Let them not say: "As for my soul, there is no hope"; but let them think of the wretch crucified by the side of the

Saviour. Let them knock, like him, by the prayer of a repentant heart at the Heart of Christ dying, and they will hear this consoling word: "Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." Today even; for, the soul of the sinner, broken, perhaps, by a so great sorrow for its faults that the abysses that separate her from God will be filled up in an instant.

III.

The Son of God has spoken, and, behold, how the day has become obscure! A mysterious night gathers around! In the obscurity a man and a woman glide before the Cross. The woman is standing, and looks with her eyes full of tears. He Who dies above; she is His Mother. Her heart is full of anguish, and this anguish is seen in her disconsolate look.

Holy Soul of my Saviour, speak again. You are touched this time by the grieved eyes and heart of a Mother, and You reply to her by a canticle of love. It is to the human race You speak, and You say: "Behold thy Mother!" What have we done, O beloved Jesus, to merit such a pledge of Your love? Ah, I seem to hear all that is said at the bottom of Your tortured Heart: "I have given all to My friends, to My brethren, to My little children. I have given them My annihilated glory, My word, My miracles, My promises, My entire Person under fragile species, My Blood of which there will not remain in a little while a single drop in My exhausted flesh, in My dried-up veins, in My transpierced Heart. I have no longer anything but My Mother. Well, My friends, My brethren, My little children, take My Mother. She is yours. Behold your Mother!"

And Mary is our Mother! She has begotten us in sorrow on the hill of Calvary, in consenting to the sacrifice of her dear Son. Now, she would wish to repudiate us and curse us, only she could not do it without repudiating and cursing all that she did. She is for us a living love. Her Son has kept against us the power of her arm. She, like a good mother, has only the tenderness of her heart. She leans towards us. She carries us in her arms. She consoles us. She protects us, both against the snares of the devil whom she has conquered, and against the anger of God Who can refuse nothing to her sweet prayers. She is our Mother. "Health of the weak." "Refuge of sinners." "Consoler of the afflicted." "Help of Christians." Her heart is open to all our miseries. She is the last pledge of the immense love with which the Sacred Heart of Jesus is filled for us in His Passion. O Mary! O beloved Mother! The child of your sorrows salutes you. Thank for him the adorable dying One Who before giving up the last sigh has said to the world: "Behold thy Mother."

IV.

The Son of God has spoken. The darkness becomes more profound, and trouble begins to spread through the holy city. Pilate and Herod are struck with terror. They have a fear of one of those returns of popular anger which punishes the cowardly whom it has driven to crime. Anguish is in the Temple where night has entered in. All the lamps are lighted. Over the hill of Calvary weighs a sullen silence. No one now dares to approach the Cross.

And in the meantime the Son of God speaks once

more. Alas! He has not yet passed over Him all the angers of Heaven. During the tortures of the Passion His Father made Him feel His invisible Presence. He owes that to Him more than ever, now that He endures inexpressible sorrows. But this word must be accomplished: "Cursed be He that hangeth on the infamous tree." You understand that terrible oracle, O my sweet Saviour. The Heavenly Father abandons You; it is His last blow, and to this last stroke You respond by a cry of distress: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" O my beloved Jesus, You ask of Your Father why He has abandoned You. Ah! I know it only too well. It is because I have abandoned Him. He punishes You for my ingratitudes and treasons, and He gives me in Your adorable Person the merciful spectacle of the curse which I prepared for myself by my sins. Behold there, O sinners, the state in which you will be if you check not yourselves on the road of impiety. One day you will feel the immense want of God, and you will cry out like the Saviour: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Sad elegy of your heart afflicted by a malediction without remedy, which will fill the echoes of your dolorous eternity. I beseech you, I conjure you, hear the cry of distress of One answering for your iniquities. Have pity on yourselves, and stay by a prompt repentance, by a pious and profound horror of the malice, of the scandal, of the number, of the ingratitude of your sins, the God Who already perhaps flies far from you.

V.

The Son of God has spoken, and the darkness begins to be dissipated. The pale stars invited to the spec-

tacle of the last agony of the Saviour disappear one after another. According as the light returns the enemies of the Divine Martyr take courage, and recommence to insult Him; but He hears them no longer. An immense spectacle entirely absorbs Him. He sees pass under His eyes all the souls that He came to save. He hears their cries of distress, as He replies to them with a cry of love and desire: "I thirst." The executioners misunderstand Him. They dip a sponge in vinegar, and present it to the Saviour, Who refuses it. It is not that He asks for. He wishes for souls; souls, living and touching images of the Divine perfection. He desires them. He calls them. "I thirst."

Ah, my Saviour! if I met a man about to die by the side of the road; if this man asked me for a drink; would I refuse him? To staunch the mysterious thirst that torments You, You wish for my soul. Take it, then. I keep it from You no longer. I am moved, I am grieved from the bottom of my heart to see You suffer so much, and I am sure of it, those people are as I. They long to see finished Your too long sufferings.

Jesus, Jesus, receive our souls; since You are thirsty for them. In entering into Your adorable Heart let them receive from It the mysterious torment. Let them feel the thirst of desire for Him Who covets them and calls them, and for His suffering and for His holy love. Let them have a thirst for other souls in order to give them to You in giving themselves. Let all those who hear Your divine cry repeat after You: "I thirst for the souls of my parents." "I thirst." Christian husband. "I thirst." Christian mother, "I thirst for the souls of my children." "I thirst." Christian child, "I

thirst for the souls of my parents." "I thirst." Christian friend, "I thirst for the soul of my friends." "I thirst." Priest and apostle, "I thirst for all souls perishing for sins." "I thirst."

VI.

The Son of God has spoken. The last hour approaches. A cold sweat suffuses the trembling body of the Saviour. The Magdalen, broken with grief, leans at the foot of the Cross. Mary, sustained by the beloved disciple, keeps her eyes fixed on her dying Son. Listen once more.

Jesus casts a profound glance into the depths of ages, on His Personality, on His missions, on His work accomplished, and on its continuation to the end of time, and His holy soul bursts forth in this sublime finale: "All is consummated." The prophecies which announce the mission of Redemption of the Incarnate Word, His humiliations, His reproaches, His sufferings, His ignominious punishment, the prophecies are fulfilled. "It is consummated." Sin which outraged the Divine Majesty, sin is consummated. "It is consummated." The justice and the mercy of God which wished to kiss each other only over the immolated Body of a Divine Victim, the justice and the mercy of God are consummated. "It is consummated." The love whose last word is sacrifice, the desires of love which save souls by immolating itself, love and the desires of love are consummated. The heroic sufferings which are to serve as an example and as a sublime provocation to perfection, the heroic sufferings are consummated. "It is consummated."

VII.

Only one thing remains to be consummated: The last homage of veneration of the Saviour for His Father and of His humble submission to His will in death.

Well, behold death. It arrives, silent and invisible, before enemies and friends. It stops at the foot of the Cross and looks into the eyes of the executed One, which say to it: "The time is come; strike!" And it strikes, and the holy Soul of the Saviour with an infinite sweetness and strength replies to this last stroke by the departing song: "My Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." This last canticle penetrates the Heavens and causes the wrath of God to fall. The earth trembles. The rocks are split. The veil of the temple is rent. The tombs are opened, and all ghosts escape from them, groaning and in a mournful voice they go about repeating all through the city, "Jesus is dead!" "Jesus is dead!" Jesus is dead, and it is we sinners who have slain Him. Shall we dare to deny our crime? Shall we dare with our hand stretched out over the bloody corpse to swear that we are not guilty of His death? Ah, we cannot do it. That head pierced with thorns; that pale countenance on which have faded the flowers of life; that sacred side opened by the iron of the lance; those hands and feet pierced with nails; that body, naked, bruised, torn, soiled, inanimate; it is our work; it is our crime. On your knees! On your knees! Let us respond to the last outcry of the sentiments of the holy Soul of the Saviour by the cry of our repentance. At the foot of the Cross let us chant the "Miserere," Have mercy on us, O Lord! have mercy; Miserere! Miserere!

1. Clement Christ, Who prayest for Thy execu-

tioners, have mercy on our souls so prone to take offense; so reluctant to pardon!

2. Merciful Christ, Who promised pardon to the repentant thief, have mercy on all thieves of Thy glory, on all those blind sinners who, after having outraged Thee during the whole of a long life, do not understand in front of Thy Cross, that if the Innocent endures so great evils the guilty ought to suffer a thousand and a thousand times more than He to obtain their pardon and have a right to His Paradise.

3. Christ, liberal and magnificent in the gifts of Thy love, have mercy on the ungrateful ones who have abused Thy benefits, and have not known how to profit by the love and protection of the sweet Mother whom Thou hast given them to become the pious and devoted children of Thy spiritual family.

4. Christ, abandoned by God, have mercy on the wretched ones who have separated themselves wilfully from the Father and Master of their whole life, and pardon them all their faults, all the crimes by which they have withdrawn themselves from His sovereign authority, and from His infinite goodness; their proud minds; their unfaithful hearts; and their corrupt bodies.

5. Christ, athirst for souls, have mercy on the sacrilegious obstinacy of those who have resisted up to now Thy appeals; on the shameful parsimony of those who give themselves only half; on the selfish indifference of those who see perish around them the souls whom they could and ought to save.

6. Christ, the finisher of all perfection, have mercy on the sloth which makes us despise the heroic sufferings of Thy imitators, and holds us down to a life

common and without honor, if it does not offend Thee by shameful pleasures.

7. Christ, annihilated in reverence towards Thy Divine Father and so humbly submissive even to the last sigh to all He wills, have mercy on our irreligion, our irreverences, our levity in the worship we owe to God; on our impatiences; our murmurs; on the revolts of our will in the accidents of life, and in the trials which Providence sends us.

Have mercy! Have mercy! Miserere! Miserere!

Oh, yes, beloved Jesus, have mercy, and in pardoning us open up in our hearts abysses of love. Make us share the sentiments with which Thy holy Soul was animated in the days of Thy passion; Thy profound veneration for the sacred Majesty of God: Thy perfect and sublime acquiescence to all His wills; Thy profound horror of sin; Thy tender mercy for sinners; Thy generosity in forgiving; Thy thirst for souls; Thy ardent desire for our perfection.

And thus will be accomplished the desire of the great apostle: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

FEAST OF ST. THOMAS OF AQUIN, O. P.

I.

His Prodigious Learning.

1. The child of prophecy; in learning and holiness the world should never again see his equal.

2. "He is called Thomas; that is, abyss." His vast power of intellect. "The great dumb ox of Sicily."

3. The world's greatest representative of human learning and the greatest of the Church's doctors. His greatness acknowledged even by the Church's enemies.

4. Testimonies of Popes and Councils. "He holds the scepter in the empire of learning." The Council of Trent places his immortal Summa side by side with the Bible.

II.

His Wondrous Holiness.

1. Advantages and disadvantages of learning. It fosters pride, ambition, indevotion. Holiness combats passion and keeps learning within bounds. Men and women of mediocre talent, the most noisy in the world of learning.

2. His humility urges him to envelope his intellectual glory in shadow. Instances of his humility are given. "Obedience is the perfection of religious life." He never in his life felt the slightest motion of vainglory.

3. His tender effusions of Divine love. His intoxication of tears. His glorious hymns to the Blessed Sacrament. His frequent extacies. His sweetness and charity to all.

4. "The angel of the schools." The angelic doctor. Conspicuous victory over temptation. The angels' reward.

5. His heroic mortification. He dreamt only of nourishing his soul by meditation.

III.

His Intellectual Triumphs.

1. "This day I have finished with the Manicheans." His superiority, the cause of the bitterness with which he has been assailed by Protestants.

2. His stupendous apostolate. All the great ones of the earth

seek light and guidance from him in their affairs. He taught in all the great schools of Europe.

3. His Summa left unfinished. Contemplation and extasy had become the habit of his life.

4. His canonization and increasing glory. The patron of all Catholic colleges and schools. The translation of his relics one of the proudest pageants in history.

I.

His Prodigious Learning.

1. We celebrate during the course of the year the feasts of many saints of the Dominican family, of men and women who in their day shed luster on the Church by the splendor of their virtues and achievements. The names of several will at once rise to your lips: Catherine, and Raymond, and Vincent, and Peter, and Pius, and Agnes, and others.

But today we commemorate the memory of one more illustrious than all these, of one who by the splendor of his genius and by his phenomenal learning and holiness has gained a unique position in the Catholic world, and who is recognized by all as the interpreter by excellence of the Church's doctrine. This is he of whom not only the Dominican Order but the whole Church is so justly proud, the incomparable Doctor, St. Thomas of Aquin.

It becomes my duty today to give you an outline of his holy life, and of the great works he accomplished for the cause of God and religion.

Born in the little city of Aquin, in the kingdom of Naples, under the beautiful sky of southern Italy, our saint was from his earliest years to give promise of the fulfilment of the prophecy made by a holy hermit to his mother before his birth, that she should have a

son so celebrated for his learning and holiness that the world from his time should never again see his equal.

But which of these qualities shall I develop for you, dearly beloved; for both are essential in one whom the Church venerates in the double capacity of doctor and saint—the astonishing extent of his learning or the virtues of his angelic life?

2. To say that St. Thomas was a genius of the highest order, a man gifted with an angelic intellect, one in whom nature and grace combined to produce a prodigy, is but to repeat what has been said by the most illustrious Popes and scholars since his time. "He is called Thomas," say his contemporaries, "that is to say, abyss." And an abyss truly was his mind, as seen reflected in his glorious works, the vastness and profundity of which no one has yet been able fully to explore. To a vast and faithful memory which retained forever what he had once read he joined an extraordinary power of reflection which enabled him to concentrate his thoughts continually on the most sublime objects.

This power of concentrated thought, together with his silence and modesty, gained for him from his companions, while a student in the university of Cologne, the nickname of "the great dumb ox of Sicily"; and many were the expressions of sympathy on the part of his fellow students for one whom they considered of mediocre talents; till, on a great occasion his genius is revealed, and his master, Blessed Albert the Great, himself perhaps the greatest Doctor of that age, famous in history for the number and greatness of its scholars, seeing his own light eclipsed in Thomas's superior light, cried out prophetically: "We call brother Thomas 'the dumb ox of Sicily.' I tell you, my friends, this ox will one day put

forth such bellowings as shall be heard even to the extremities of the world."

3. And the world has, indeed, heard St. Thomas, and has saluted him as her greatest representative of human learning; even as the Church has saluted him as the champion of her teachings, and the greatest of her Doctors. There is no branch of science, human or divine, that has not been enriched and illustrated from the copious fountain of his intellect, which poured forth thoughts and principles broad and deep in an impetuous flood. Prompt to conceive and fertile to give birth to profound and sublime thoughts, he arranged them with the ability of a master; and he had such a command over himself that it is said he could dictate to four secretaries on different subjects at the same time. Theology, philosophy, the interpretation of books sacred and profane, history, political economy, poetry; he has treated all with the splendor of an incomparable genius. Could I but make the enumeration of his works? It would be an endless task. Suffice it to say that as the result of the contracted period of one short life he has left to the Church a legacy which makes the boast of all the learned churchmen since his time to be able fully to understand and to interpret clearly.

This power of our holy Doctor will be acknowledged even by the Church's enemies, and it was an arrogant boast of the heresiarch Bucer, perhaps the most learned of the leaders of the so-called "Reformation," "Take away Thomas of Aquin and I will destroy the Church." True it is that the Church being Divine and indefectible, stands in need of no human help for its preservation; but this boast of one of the great enemies of the Church shows us the position under God St. Thomas holds in regard to our holy religion.

4. But not to weary you with the relation of his triumphs in the field of learning, let me here give a few of the testimonies of those most competent to judge, and say with a long list of Sovereign Pontiffs who commend the study of his works, that his doctrine is "sure," "true," "eminent beyond all others," "miraculous," "divine," that "he holds the scepter in the empire of learning," and conclude with the glorious testimony of the late illustrious Pope Leo XIII, who says in his encyclical to the Catholic world: "The angelic Doctor fills the earth with the glory of his doctrine." "Reason," he continues, "lifted on his angelic pinions can scarcely soar higher, and faith can scarcely hope from reason helps more numerous and more powerful than those which it receives from Thomas of Aquin."

Can I add anything to this testimony, dearly beloved? Yes, I can, and a day of unsurpassed glory will arrive for our saint when, in the midst of the assembly of the pastors of the Church in the most celebrated of her General Councils, two books are placed side by side on a throne of state, and the Fathers of Trent will salute them as the depositories of the Church's doctrine, and the fountains of her teaching; and those books are, a copy of the holy Bible, and the immortal Summa of St. Thomas.

II.

His Wondrous Holiness.

1. But perhaps I am insisting too much on his triumphs as a teacher. Let me turn aside awhile to edify you by the recital of his virtues. Learning has, indeed, its advantages, but it has also its disadvantages, and I very much doubt whether, in our nature, unbalanced

and put out of its equilibrium by sin, the disadvantages in this matter do not carry the day.

Without doubt learning perfects the human soul, can conduct it to God, and aid it in virtue; but, still, we must be on our guard against passion which leads it astray and corrupts it. It is the property of holiness to combat this passion and to confine learning within just bounds and preserve it from an unhealthy flatulency. For, "knowledge puffeth up," the apostle says, and this is the first and commonest of its inconveniences. Souls modest by temperament are rare, and, as a rule, of no great merit. The greater number of the learned can subscribe to the examination of conscience of the great Plato: "We love to glorify ourselves and pride ourselves out of what we know."

And I want you to remember well, my brethren, that they are not the minds most richly endowed who usually draw after them the greatest train of worldly consequence and make the greatest noise in the world. No; they are as a rule men and women of mediocre talents who, if I may so describe it, make their flatulent swelling of a wordy knowledge pass for the solid fat of true greatness.

2. "Knowledge puffeth up." St. Thomas knew this sentence of the apostle well and meditated on it till he filled his soul with a salutary terror of it. Hence, it was that whilst a student he concealed with such discreet modesty the sublime and profound ideas that he felt maturing in his beautiful intellect. And when it was no longer possible to hide the light; when, attracted by its splendor, glory marched before him, he wished to envolep it in shadow. He made himself so little, so amiable, simple, and serivceable to all, that one knows not which the more to admire in him—the splendor of his genius, or the depth of his humility.

With what joy in the bitter quarrels of the university of Paris, hostile to the teachings of the Mendicant Orders, did he not accept injury, hard treatment, and public humiliation? With what docility did he not permit himself to be reproved before all his brethren for alleged faults in grammar and pronunciation, even when he spoke correctly? With what amiable complacency did he not set himself to perform humble services that were asked of him in the name of obedience? And in this connection it is told of him how, when once a strange brother was sent out to beg, he was directed by the prior to take with him for companion the first friar he should meet. This happened to be Thomas. And though he could have excused himself on the plea that he was not contemplated in the command of the superior, yet he went on the instant as the brother's companion. And for the greater part of the day, to the edification of all, the great Doctor was seen puffing and limping through the streets, for he was a great fat man, and occasionally receiving sharp reprimands from his younger and more active companion for his slowness of movement. When at last the brother came to know who was his companion he humbly apologized for his rudeness, only to be the more edified by the humble Thomas, who replied in words that have become an aphorism: "Obedience is the perfection of religious life."

Knowledge puffeth up, and one of the consequences of this unhealthy flatulency is the blind infatuation which cannot recognize or bear any superior, and revolts against contradiction.

Another is the ambition of honors. It would seem that all positions are due to him who by study and the development of his intellect has raised himself above the

herd of the uncultured. He cannot content himself with a vague esteem, or a sterile applause of his admirers. He wants titles, distinctions. Give him something. He wants more, and will not be able to prevent the scandalous explosion of his discontent, if haste is not made to satisfy him. Hence, so many scandals in church and state where once eminent men being disappointed in the object of their desires, descend to the abyss of treachery and apostacy. And even when this ambition for honors and distinctions is not carried to the last excess, how many miserable quarrels, and sordid jealousies, all enemies of holiness?

The humble Thomas, although he held in the intellectual world the scepter of learning, demanded only to be eclipsed, and in order to put in evidence his knowledge and genius it was necessary that obedience and charity should make of it for him a duty. Nay, so far was he from desiring or canvassing for distinctions, that, as he himself avows, he never in his life felt even the slightest emotion of vainglory. "O grace divine," cries out the Church in her liturgy, "grace divine which surpasses every prodigy; he was always sheltered from the poisoned shafts of pride." He detested honors; and yet he was obliged to bear all his life the persecution of them.

3. There is a third inconvenience attached to knowledge, or, rather, that one encounters in the effort to attain it. It is one against which those who give themselves to study cannot be too much on their guard. And it is this: that knowledge, whilst it perfects the intellect, leaves the will untouched. And it is a common reproach of learning, that whilst it enlightens the mind, it dries up the heart. Hence, it is sometimes styled a light without

warmth; and is compared to the arctic sun, which, however brilliantly it may illuminate the surface of the earth, fails to melt the icy covering that envelopes it, and unbosom it to life and vegetation.

Such could not be said of the learning of St. Thomas, and he loved to repeat with the apostle: "Did I know all mysteries and possess all knowledge, without love I am nothing."

That heart of his, great in its affections, as his mind was fertile in sublime thoughts, became early possessed of the love of God. And this charity, becoming intensified with his growth in years, gave birth to those tender effusions of Divine love, to that intoxication of tears when he celebrated the Holy Mysteries, and was the source of those sublime hymns and canticles which he inserted in the lovely Office and Mass of the Blessed Sacrament composed by him, and which we chant during Holy Benediction and whenever the Most Holy Sacrament is solemnly adored. In his scientific meditations he had caught a glimpse of the greatness of God and his heart melted with love at seeing Him so little between his hands during the celebration of Mass—a contrast the thought of which frequently threw him into an ecstasy.

Not only did Thomas love God even to the extent of swooning away with the overpowering mastery of his affections, but when he descended from the sacred heights to which his love had carried him he showed himself so full of charms to all, so radiant with sweetness, that no one could see him without being carried away with love for him. Crowds waited for him, if only to see him in the streets as he passed along. They threw themselves in his presence to enjoy the happi-

ness of looking at him. A single glance from his eye entering into the soul carried with it consolation, peace, and joy.

4. There is another virtue that shone in him with peculiar brilliancy, and that won for him a title more glorious than that which attached to his vast learning and sublime doctrine—I mean the virtue of chastity. This virtue merited for him to be styled whilst yet young in life "the Angel of the Schools," and among the illustrious of the Church's roll call he has borne in all time the noble title of "the Angelic Doctor."

His love for this virtue was shown in a very striking manner in the heroic struggle he was obliged to undergo to carry out his resolution of entering the Dominican Order. Being a member of the noble house of Aquin, and grand-nephew of the emperor, Frederic Barbarossa, his relatives thought it beneath them that a scion of their house should disgrace them by becoming a member of a Mendicant Order. These relatives understood not that God is master of vocations, and they spared nothing to turn him from his humble and generous design.

But nothing could shake his resolution; neither their subtle reasonings; nor the prospective greatness they dangled before his eyes; nor the somber picture of humiliation and suffering which they said awaited him in a Mendicant Order; nor the high influences that were put to work to stagger him in his resolution; nor the tears of his mother; nor the caresses of his sisters. The prison itself only gave him leisure for prayer and labor.

It was then that the last proof was tried, and it was worthy of the two soldiers who had conceived it. A shameless woman is bribed to tempt the virtue of their

brother. But then it was that the angelic young man thought that the time had come to cease to be sweet and patient if he would not cease to be pure. Arming himself with a burning brand, he put to flight the impious woman whose audacity had up to this obtained easy victory. And as a reward of this last triumph God permitted him to fall into an ecstatic slumber, during which angels descended and bound his loins with a mystic girdle, as if to protect with an inviolable rampart the chaste sanctuary in which Divine Wisdom was to work such marvels.*

5. No one was more free from the slavery of the senses. He was so mortified that he lived as one without a body, not knowing what to eat, or whether he had eaten, or even when he ought to eat, so that it was necessary that a brother should be told off to remind him that it was necessary to nourish himself sometimes, at last to preserve his life. He dreamt only of nourishing his soul by meditation, and of laboring in the glorious work of his apostolate. And even whilst at table when all others thought only of the food that nourishes the body, Thomas, at the contemplation of the Supersubstantial Food prepared for our souls by Jesus Christ, was often wrapt in ecstasy.

III.

His Intellectual Triumphs.

1. It is related of him how once when dining with the good St. Louis, King of France, while all the company

*This girdle, still fresh and limber as the day when it was carried down from Heaven, is preserved in the Dominican monastery of Chieri, in Italy, and, according to the testimony of scientists who have tested it, it is made of a material different to any of which they have had experience.

around were bandying courtly compliments and quaffing toasts to the welfare of their king and country the mind of Thomas advanced far into the field of controversy. Michael-like among the hosts of God alone he championed the Church's doctrine, and challenged the most formidable of her enemies. Armed with the sword of the spirit, he slashed right and left; he hewed down; he cut through; he overturned the basis of their errors; and while absorbed in the possession of his triumphant argument, he was guilty of an indiscretion which has become historic. For, forgetful of the royal presence; forgetful of the distinguished company around him, to the astonishment of all, down came his hand with a tremendous bounce upon the table, whilst he exclaimed: "This day I have finished with the Manicheans."

The discomfiture of this formidable heresy was but one of the triumphs of his career, and before the end of his successful life he had finished with all the enemies of the Church. He confounded all. He overthrew all, either actually, or by anticipation. Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Mahomedans, Manicheans, detractors of monastic Orders and of religious life; he confounded all. And Protestantism itself, though it raised its head only nigh on three hundred years after his blessed death, was checked in its devastating career by the arguments drawn from his incomparable works; and this is the secret of the bitterness with which he has been assailed by the leaders of the "Reformation" and by the heretical writers of this as well as of preceding centuries.

2. What more shall I say? In the midst of the stupendous labors of his Doctorate he found time to exercise a most laborious apostolate. He was consulted

from all parts as the universal Doctor. Popes, bishops, kings, princes, sent delegates to ask of him light and guidance in their affairs. Theologians and universities brought to him to resolve for them the most difficult questions. To all he replied, often by long letters and pamphlets. He taught in all the great schools of Europe: Paris, Rome, Bologna, Naples; in all the cities where the Papal court sojourned; at Viterbo, Orvietto, Fondi, Perugia. From the school he passed to the pulpit to preach to the people. And it was in the midst of a life such as this that he found time to write admirable commentaries, and to build prodigious monuments of science, in the midst of which rears itself in proud triumph his Summa of Theology.

3. His call to heaven is heard before he finishes his last work, and then he ceases to write and closes his books to look no longer but on God. Contemplation and ecstasy had become a habit of his life, even to the day when God heard the desire he expressed at the end of one of his hymns and raised the veil that covered His adorable face and made him happy in the contemplation of His glory.

It was on the 7th of March, 1274, some hours before the dawn, that the Angelic Doctor expired sweetly in the arms of the monks of the abbey of Fossa-Nova. At the news of his death the Christian world is moved, and there is heard in the Dominican Order, in all the schools, and even in the Papal court, the cry of universal regret, "Our light is extinguished, our sun has disappeared."

4. My brethren, I have done. It remains for me only to add a few words to tell of the honors conferred on him after his blessed departure. He was canonized in

the year 1323, and during the centuries that have elapsed his reputation as the teacher by eminence in the Church has grown from year to year, till that crowning day, some thirty-five years ago, when the late Pope Leo XIII, of blessed memory, declared him the patron of all Catholic colleges and schools.

Some three-quarters of a century after his death his relics were by the command of the Sovereign Pontiff, Urban V, removed from the cloisters of Fossa-Nova to the Dominican Convent at Toulouse. This translation, the feast of which we celebrate on the twenty-eighth of January, was the occasion of one of the proudest pageants in the history of the Church. And as the blessed remains approached the city the populace, to the number of a hundred and fifty thousand carrying lighted torches, joined in the procession, which extended over ten miles. The translation was attended by the great dignitaries of the kingdom, among whom the king himself, Charles V, was represented by his brother, the Duke of Anjou.

For us, dearly beloved, let us try and honor him as his clients and brethren, frequently invoking his powerful patronage before God in the words so often quoted from the Office of his feast:

"O Thomas, pride and glory of the Dominican Order. O teacher of the sacred sciences, lift us to the contemplation of heavenly truths."

ST. PATRICK'S DAY.

ST. PATRICK.*

His Call and Preparation.

I.

1. Introduction. World-wide celebration of St. Patrick's feast.

2. Military power of the Irish kings in the fourth and fifth centuries. Events that led to the Saint's capture.

3. His holy life during his captivity. His escape. His call to the apostolate of Ireland. Causes of his long preparation for the apostolate.

II.

1. His episcopal consecration. "A day which the Lord hath made." Laoghaire's birthday celebration. The Druid's prophecy. "St. Patrick's breastplate."

2. Wondrous success of his apostolate. He blesses the men of Munster. His gigantic labors.

III.

Stupendous results of his life work. The conversion of Ireland a unique fact in the history of the Church. Glories of the Irish Church.

I.

1. This day, dearly beloved, the feast of our National Apostle, is one that is celebrated with joy and festivity in every land to which have wandered the children of "the sea-divided Gael." And wherever a man or woman of the Irish race is found today, whether it be in our own dear island home, or amid the busy centers of commerce and industry of Great Britain, or away beyond the rolling Atlantic amid the giant cities, and the broad savannahs, and the snow-capped mountains of the great land of the West, or, further still, among the burning swamps of India, or

*Preached in the Dominican Church, Holy Cross, Tralee, Ireland, 1908.

on the great island continent of the Southern Seas, wherever, I say, a man or woman of the Irish race is found today, there Patrick's name is recalled with thanksgiving and reverence on account of the great boon brought to our forefathers by him in the great times, long ago.

Yes, Patrick, our father, the sons and daughters of the Irish race under every sky today salute thee! The white-robed myriads of Irish saints who swell the ranks of the Church Triumphant today salute thee! And we, too, thy children, unite with our countrymen and women in every land in proclaiming thy praises and testifying that we will be faithful to the trust thou under God hast entrusted to us, and we will hand down the faith unsullied we received through thee!

And now, dearly beloved, it is usual on an occasion such as this to bring under review the chief life actions of him whom we all look up to as our father in the faith and our advocate all-powerful before the throne of God.

2. As to the manner of life of Patrick, and as to the circumstances that originally brought him to our shores, you are all more or less familiar, since these form one of the chief headings of the history of our race.

Our country cannot, indeed, glory in the success of her arms, and in the brilliancy of her conquests, yet great warriors she can count among her sons, and ones, too, who played a prominent part in the history of their time.

In the epoch dating from the beginning of the latter half of the fourth century, and continuing on to the end of the first half of the fifth, she was fortunate in

a succession of several good monarchs who not only preserved order and prosperity at home, but who made their power felt in far-flung fields of conquest. Such were, among others, Criomthon Mor, (Creevan the Great), Niall of the Nine Hostages, and Dathi, who carried the Irish arms to victory over the peoples of Alba, or Scotland, Britain, and Gaul. Even Stilicho, the great Roman general, "the last of the Romans," as he has been called, and Theodosius, the father of Theodosius the Great, could scarcely withstand the onslaught of the Irish warriors, and as has been sung by the Roman poet, Claudian: "The Scot moved all Ierne against us, and the ocean foamed under his hostile oars." (Note—See Appendix No. 1, page 303.)

It was on the occasion of their return from one of those expeditions abroad that the boy, Succat, son of the Gallo-Roman, Calphurn, was, as he himself tells us in his *Confession,* carried away captive *"with many thousands of others,"* and given over as a slave to a chieftain from the north of Ireland named Milcho. There among the Antrim hills he for six years watched over his master's cattle.

3. Finding himself thus rudely torn away from home and friends, and living, as he tells us, "at the ends of the earth, among strangers," the heart of the boy turned instinctively to God. He spent his days and nights in prayer. In his *Confession,* that venerable document still extant, he tells us that he prayed a "hundred times a day, and nearly as many times at night, and that while he was in the woods and on mountains"; "that he rose before the dawn to pray in snow, and in ice, and in rain," and thus he advanced rapidly in perfection, "because," as he continues, "there was no slothfulness in him, and because the spirit in him was fervent."

But it was not God's will that he should spend his life in captivity, so, obeying an intimation from heaven, he escaped to his native land. Whether captivated by that fascination of the land and its people, which is the common experience of strangers who have lived amongst us; or, out of pity for a people who were still groping in the darkness of paganism, the thoughts of the young man, now restored to freedom, often turned in yearning to the land in which he had spent so many unhappy days. God also put into his heart the longing desire to spend his life in an effort to win over its noble people to the faith. Be that as it may, he tells us that he had visions in his sleep in which he seemed to hear the children of Erin calling upon him to return and bring to them the light of the true faith.

Yielding to what was evidently a Divine call, he commenced his long and arduous preparation for the apostolate of Ireland.

You may wonder why it was that Patrick (for that is the name that has been given him), though he had evidently the conversion of Ireland at heart from the beginning, spent the long probation of forty years in preparation for his apostolate. But this, dearly beloved, comes from the learning and holiness required in him who is called to so high an office. For the apostle stands at the head of those who are numbered among the saints of God. On him, according to St. Paul, the foundations of the Church are laid. He must be a man, therefore, of consummate sanctity and knowledge, one who can say to his neophites as did St. Paul: "Be ye imitators of me, as I am of Jesus Christ." The example laid down by the apostle of a country is to be the rule to which his children in after ages are to make

an effort all their lives to conform. Moreover, God destined the country of St. Patrick's destiny to be in after ages the chief sanctuary of the faith among the nations, the nation chosen to be the propagandist and standard-bearer of the faith to all the countries of Western Europe.

II.

The Apostolate of Ireland.

1. And now having received the episcopal consecration and the blessing of the successor of St. Peter, our saint, accompanied by a large retinue of priests and clerics, directs his steps toward the land of his destiny.

And, Oh, truly, it might be sung by the children of the Gael, that the day of Patrick's landing on the green shores of Erin was indeed "a day which the Lord hath made" a day of joy and jubilee to the whole Church of God. And contemplating the possibilities then disclosed, and realizing the after-effects throughout the centuries, of his labors, and his many prayers, and his sacrifices, we might join in the beautiful saying of the prophet and say, "Blessed upon the mountains are the feet of him who cometh to bring good tidings, and to preach the gospel of peace."

First of all he seeks out the scene of his early captivity, and this he does for two reasons; first, in order to bring the blessing of the faith to the family of his former master, Milcho; and, secondly, to give time to himself and his companions for a serious study of the Irish language before making the grand assault on the stronghold of paganism and error—the court of the high king of Erin, at Tara.

It is now the springtime of the year. A great pagan

solemnity is at hand. Laoghaire, the high king, the son of Niall, is about to celebrate, with many pagan rites and ceremonies, the anniversary of his birthday. Every fire throughout the land is put out, nor shall it again be kindled till the great beacon fire blazes out on Tara's Hill. The evening of the solemnity is come. The pagan priests are hurrying to and fro, preparing for the ceremonies, when, lo, on yonder hill of Slane shines out the Paschal fire lighted by Patrick and his companions.

Every mind is in consternation! The king, indignant, summons his council, and inquires who was he that dared to transgress the royal mandate and cast insult on the gods of Erin. No one can explain, till the arch-druid stands up, and in prophetic strains commences: "Great king, the fire that shines on yonder hill is kindled by a stranger, and if not put out tonight, 'twill spread throughout the land, and never be put out in Erin."

The soul of the jealous king is troubled when he is told of the strangers' coming. He fears for his throne. He fears for his gods. He fears that a rival is come to share his power. And share it this rival will, and increase he will, till allegiance to Patrick and his God become supreme and everlasting, so that ages after the royal power shall have been swept away Ireland will still be fresh and enthusiastic in her allegiance to Patrick and the faith he preaches.

Couriers are sent in haste to drag the offender before the king and council. The man of God, with the courage of the saint, promptly answers to the summons, and, as he does so, he chants forth the "Deer Cry," that wondrous canticle of faith and trust in the protection of God—the most venerable literary piece extant today

in Western Europe, and which has been murmured down the centuries by the countless children of the Irish race as their great nightly prayer of faith and trust in the Almighty.

I bind to myself today
The strong virtue of the invocation of the Trinity;
The faith of the Trinity in Unity,
The Creator of the elements.

I bind to myself today
The virtue of the Incarnation of Christ, with His Baptism,
The virtue of His Crucifixion, with His burial,
The virtue of His Resurrection, with His Ascension,
The virtue of His coming to the Seat of Judgment."

And he goes on to invoke the virtue of the love of the Seraphim, the obedience of the angels, the prayers of the patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, and confessors, and holy virgins.

He invokes the attributes of the God-head and the powers of nature, to be to him a help "against the snares of demons, and the temptations of vices, and every man who meditates him injury." And, finally, he ends in that lovely invocation, so familiar to our fathers and mothers of a generation or two ago:

"Christ be with me; Christ before me;
Christ behind me; Christ within me;
Christ beneath me; Christ above me;
Christ at my right hand; Christ at my left;
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me;
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks to me;
Christ in every eye that sees me;
Christ in every ear that hears me."

2. What shall I say? In that day is Ireland's faith laid deep in the hearts of her most learned and gifted sons. We are told that several of the most gifted of that learned assembly, convinced by the pleadings of the saint and by the Divine truth that shone in his teaching, were converted to Christianity and sought Baptism at his hands. The King himself, indeed, was not converted; for, obstinate pagan that he was, he persevered till death, in heart at last, in the worship of his idols; but amongst the first who generously joined themselves to our apostle and his companions were several of his brothers, his wife, and daughters, and Dubhthach, and Erc, the chief poets and judges of Erin.

From that day the saint's passage through the land may be said to be a succession of triumphs for the faith. Everywhere thousands flocked to hear him and to receive Baptism at his hands. West, North, East, South, he travels, everywhere scattering the seed of the Divine Word; everywhere gathering the abundant harvest of the Gospel. Now, he baptizes hundreds, nay, sometimes thousands, at one or other of the holy wells, so numerous through the country. Now, he founds churches and monasteries, and stocks them with religious. Now, he ordains ecclesiastics to carry on the work so happily begun by him.

Occasionally he retires to some mountain solitude, such as that of Croagh Patrick in Mayo, or to some island sanctuary such as that of Lough Derg in Donegal, ever since renowned throughout the Christian world as St. Patrick's Purgatory, to refresh his spiritual life, and prepare by prayer and contemplation, for his future labors. And it is told how, after a whole Lent passed thus by him, he obtained wonderful graces from God for

himself and his people, amongst others, the promise on the part of God that the faith of Ireland should never fail, and that he himself on the last day should be co-judge of the Irish people.

'Tis true, I believe, that the great apostle never set foot in your ancient Kingdom of Kerry; for, here, before his time, there were numerous Christians; but if he did not, he took care to send some of his associates to evangelize this part of the country, and he, moreover, sent it a father's blessing. And we can well fancy to ourselves a scene like that described so graphically by his biographer, St. Evan, where the saint, surrounded by the fervent men and women of the South, and looking towards the noble ridge of Slieve Luchtra, which separates South Limerick from your county, he lifts his voice and prays—

"A blessing on the men of Munster,
A blessing on the land that gives them food,
A blessing on all treasures produced upon their plains,
A blessing upon Munster,
A blessing upon their woods, and on their sloping plains,
A blessing on their glens,
A blessing on their hills,
As the sands of the sea under ships; so numerous be
their homesteads.
In slopes, in plains,
In mountains and in peaks,
Be a blessing."

From the great day of Tara I have said Patrick's career in Ireland was a series of successes. But all was not for our saint a triumphal progress. No, trials he must meet with. Opposition he must overcome. Prejudice he must confute with the strong arguments of rea-

son. The jealousy of interested men he must confront. The barbarity of pagan manners he must reform. The laws of profane rulers he must amend. The winter's cold and the summer's heat—"the snow, and the ice, and the rain," he must endure, as in the days of his captivity; for, these are the portion of every man who would labor for the spread of the Gospel amongst an infidel people. Yes, and like St. Paul, the prison's chain must clank about his members, a prisoner for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Shall I say more? Did our apostle convert an entire nation without performing those wonders, which, according to St. Paul, are for a sign, not to believers but to unbelievers. If so, then, must we exclaim with St. Augustine: "Miracle of miracles, to convert a nation without miracles!" But, my brethren, it was not so. That Divine Master Who, when leaving His Apostles, consoled them with the promise that "such as were to believe in Him should work the signs that He worked, and greater ones than He"—that true Pastor of souls, I say, was pleased to co-operate with our apostle by the working of great and astounding miracles. And it may be said of him that, like Moses, the leader of the Israelites, he delivered his people from more than an Egyptian darkness and slavery by the power of the outstretched arm of the Almighty.

What more? Amid all his incredible labors Patrick was ever pre-eminently a man of prayer. Those devout exercises that he performed when yet a cow-herd on the Northern mountains, he still continued. And I have often thought it a pity that that noble prayer, the *"Deer Cry,"* or, as it is called, "St. Patrick's Breast-plate," one of the noblest and most soul-inspiring that ever came

from the heart of saint, is not still recited by our people as it was for fifty generations down to a generation or two ago—

"I bind to myself today
The strong virtue of the invocation of the Trinity,
The faith of the Trinity in Unity,
The Creator of the elements.
. . . . . .
Christ be with me; Christ before me;
Christ behind me; Christ within me;
Christ beneath me; Christ above me;
Christ at my right hand; Christ at my left;
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me;
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks to me;
Christ in every eye that sees me;
Christ in every ear that hears me."

3. And, now, worn out with extreme old age and with the labors and austerities of a strenuous life spent in his Master's vineyard, Patrick comes to die. What are the fruits of that life? St. Gregory of Nissa, he who was called the wonder-worker, on his deathbed could say, "I took possession of my diocese when it contained only seventeen Christians; I leave it possessed of seventeen pagans." In like manner could Patrick say, "I came to a land universally pagan; I leave it universally Christian."

Yes, what was never known in the history of the Church, a nation wholly pagan was made wholly Christian at the preaching of one man. Nay, more wonderful still, a thing which shows the highest state of civilization and national virtue on the part of our ancestors, a national priesthood was founded; the land was stocked

with monasteries of men and women; and ecclesiastical discipline was everywhere established in all its rigor.

This, I say, is a unique fact that in history has no parallel. Rome received the faith; but it was only after three centuries of bloodshed and persecution, in which millions shared the martyr's fate, and won the martyr's palm. Greece received the faith; but only after the best blood of her citizens had been shed like water. Ireland alone, of all the nations, received the faith with scarce a struggle.

III.

A Nation of Apostles.

Nor is this all. That faith assimilated by the Irish people with such facility was destined to shine in their lives with unheard-of splendor. "The Kingdom of God," we are told, has been likened to a mustard seed, "which, cast into the earth, grew into a mighty tree, and sent forth great branches, so that the birds of the air came and dwelt therein." Was ever figure more fully realized than this, in the history of the church, planted by the great husbandman, St. Patrick? At home the glory of the Church, the tree of Ireland's faith, sent forth during five centuries innumerable bands of missionaries into all lands to convert them to the religion of Jesus Christ.

Scotland, England, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and the Netherlands, all are indebted in great part to Irish missionaries for the preservation or the restoration of the light of faith at a time when the darkness of barbarism and paganism hung over them as a cloud. Will it be believed? not to speak of England and Scotland, there are to this day no fewer

than 300 Irish saints venerated in those distant countries —Irish saints—who spent their lives and many of whom shed their blood for the propagation of the faith throughout Europe. (See Appendix No. 2, page 310.)

"And the birds of the air came and dwelt in the branches thereof." There was a time, dearly beloved, when this dear old land of ours was the one spot on earth where the lamp of science shone in all its splendor. Attracted by its beautiful light scholars came from every part of Europe, nay, from Egypt and distant Asia, to be illumined. The monasteries of Erin became the great asylum for those pilgrims in pursuit of learning. Clonard, and Armagh, and Lismore, and Bangor, and Clonmacnois, and Glendalough, and "Aran of the Saints," and "Sligo of the Saxons," and many other names famous in Irish history became the sheltering places where those pilgrim birds came in thousands and tens of thousands to screen themselves from the tempest of barbarism and impiety that raged without; while the isles and headlands bordering on the coast, like your own Skellig, and Dingle, were peopled by a holy race of hermits, numerous as the seabirds which frequent these rocky haunts.

Yes, and the tree of holy Faith, having struck its roots deep into the soil of the Irish heart, has proved that it could withstand the fiercest storms of persecution. And for five centuries, first by the Danes and afterwards by the English heretics, a persecution fierce as the howling hurricane lashed itself in vain against that sturdy and immortal wood. And today, when the storm is past and the sun peeps again through the silver lining of clouds that overhang our skies, it looks down on a land true and faithful to the best traditions of the

past—on a land, which, for the deep faith and piety of its people, for the earnest devotion of its sons, and the purity and virtue of its daughters, is a living testimony to the efficacy of the promise made by God, to our great Father and Apostle, that "the faith of Ireland shall never fail."

For this, and for all other blessings we have received, we today praise God and our Saint; and in the words of the Church's hymn, from out the depths of our swelling hearts, we cry:

"Hail, glorious St. Patrick, dear saint of our isle;
On us, thy poor children, bestow a sweet smile:
And, now thou art high in the mansions above,
On Erin's green valleys look down in thy love."

ST. PATRICK.

(Preached in St. Dominic's Church, San Francisco,. 1910.)

I.

The Saint's Capture and Captivity.

1. Introduction. Californian Irish commended for their loyalty to the faith, and for their warm devotion to St. Patrick. Purpose is declared of speaking of the Saint, his work in Ireland and its results.

2. Military power of Ireland in those days. His capture, the result of an important military enterprise of the Irish Ard-Ri.

3. Story of his capture and captivity told by the Saint himself.

II.

His Call to the Apostolate. The Preparation.

1. "The voice of the Irish." The call to the apostolate one of the most wondrous phenomena of the Church's spiritual life.

2. The apostle, the spiritual father of his people. Characteristics of the apostle to be impressed on his neophites. High spiritual and intellectual qualities of the Irish.

3. Distinguished personages the Saint came in contact with in the course of his forty years' preparation for his apostolate. He goes on his mission in the fulness of power and jurisdiction.

4. The conversion of Ireland one of the strangest facts in the history of the Church. "He found her universally pagan, he left her universally Christian."

III.

Personal Qualities of the Apostle.

1. Humble, penitent, prayerful, and with a burning zeal for souls. Of these qualities he leaves memorials wherever he passes. Croagh Patrick and Lough Derg.

2. His love for his flock. Results of his great zeal.

IV.

"The Isle of Saints and Scholars."

1. Characteristics of the Kelt. Wondrous results of the Saint's evangel.

2. Irish monks evangelize Europe. In great part the founders of the monastic system in Western Christendom.

V.

"The Neobé of the Nations."

1. Dread power of the "Danes." Their devastating career and final overthrow.

2. "After the Dane, the Saxon." Testimonies of Lord Deputy Chichester and Lords Gosford and Cornwallis.

3. Irish Dominican province twice annihilated. A nation of martyrs.

4. Appeal.

I.

The Saint's Capture and Captivity.

1. The large number of those who have come to assist at Mass on this, St. Patrick's morning, is one out of the many proofs to show that devotion to the great apostle of the Irish race is still fresh and warm in the hearts of his children, even in this strange and far-off land.

It would be incongruous if it were not so; for, are not you the children of the brave pioneers who carried the faith, aye, and the ardent piety inherited from a long line of ancestors across the continent; of those religious-minded men and women who took so noble a part in building up of the Church of God throughout the length and breadth of this great land of California?

Wherefore, it is of Patrick, of his life and work in Ireland, and of the results of that life-work that I will speak to you today. It is a theme that will be of interest, not only to those of the Irish race, but also to those who have come from other lands, since the children of Patrick it was who brought the light of faith and civilization to nearly all the peoples of Western Europe.

2. And, now, as to the causes that led the great apostle originally to Ireland, you are all more or less familiar, since these form one of the chief headings of the history of the Irish race. At that time and for long Ireland held the primacy of power among the nations of Western Europe. Her King Crimhthon Mor, Crifon the Great, who died only three years before Patrick was born, not only held sway over his native country, but he was also master of Alba, or Scotland, which country the Irish in good part colonized, and of the western half of Great Britain from Northumbria to the English channel, and had carried on successful wars with the mighty Roman empire. (See Appendix No. 1, page 303.) His successor, Niall, commonly known as "of the Nine Hostages," continued his conquests in Britain. After a great battle gained over the Roman legions on the banks of the Severn in Wales, he led his victorious troops across the English Channel, then called the Ictian Sea, and pushed his conquests through the fair fields of France on to the foot of the Alps, and prepared, like Dathi, his successor, to climb their "snow-capped heights" when he was struck down by the hand of an assassin. Checked in their career of victory his followers retreated, devastating the country as they went along and carrying away to their ships riches and captives. They returned, indeed, to their native land, but they carried home with them a prize more precious far that all the spoils of the mighty Roman Empire. This was the boy Succat, son of Calphurn and Conchessa, who was known in after times as our great Apostle, Patrick.

3. He tells us himself of this captivity in his *"Confession,"* that precious document still extant, and which is the lucent reflex of his exalted and truly noble soul.

"I, Patrick, the sinner, the rudest, and least, and most contemptible of all the faithful . . . was brought captive to Ireland with many thousands of men, as we deserved," he confesses, with the deep humility characteristic of the writings of the saint, "for we had forsaken God and had not kept His Commandments, and were disobedient to our priests, who admonished us for our salvation. And the Lord brought down upon us the anger of His spirit and scattered us among many nations, even to the ends of the earth, where now my littleness may be seen among strangers."

It is a question that rises to the lips of every one: How were those years of Patrick's captivity passed, and what bearing had they on the future career of our great Apostle? What was the manner of life of this captive boy of sixteen, living at the ends of the earth, as he calls it, hundreds of miles from his once happy home? Of that life he gives us a sketch in the same *Confession*, where he says, "After I came to Ireland I was tending cattle (pecora) daily, and I prayed frequently during the day, and the love of God, and His faith, and fear, increased in me more and more. And the spirit was stirred, so that in a single day I have said as many as a hundred prayers, and in the night nearly the same, so that I remained in the woods and on the mountains. And even before the dawn I was roused to prayer in snow, and ice, and rain, nor was there any slothfulness in me as I see now, because the spirit in me was fervent."

Yes, there on that bleak mountain side in the North of Ireland, with no roof to shelter him but the canopy of heaven; no heart to pity him, save that which broke upon the cross in commiseration for our miseries; no

hand to tend him, save that which feeds the young ravens calling on Him; the prayer of the afflicted boy rose as a sweet incense before God's Throne, the results of which were one day to fall in copious showers of grace on the land of his captivity, and bring forth the abundant harvest of his ministry. In the solitude of the mountain gorge he found a sweet asylum from the din and distraction of the world. Thus passed his life during the years of his servitude to one of the chieftains of the country name Milcho.

II.

His Call and Preparation.

1. But God did not intend that Patrick should spend his entire youth in captivity. After six years of servitude, therefore, an angel of God appeared to him and commanded him to seek his liberty, and he escaped to his native land. We can fancy the joy of the young man of twenty-two restored to his home and relatives, who, filled with the joy of his return, besought him, as he tells us, that, after so many tribulations, he would no more depart from them.

But with them he was not to remain. For, as he tells us, "I saw in the midst of the night a man who appeared to come from Ireland, whose name was Victorinus (he was his guardian angel), and he had innumerable letters, one of which he gave to me, and I read the commencement of the letter, which bore the title, 'The Voice of the Irish,' and as I read aloud the beginning of the letter, I thought I heard in my mind the voice of those who were near the wood of Fuclut, which is near the Western Sea, and they cried out: 'We entreat thee, O holy youth, to come and walk still amongst us,'

and my heart was greatly moved, so that I could read no more, and so I awoke."

The heart of the holy youth is touched at the entreaty of those rude but noble people, whom he had learned to love during the years of his captivity. The children of Erin who dwelt by the Western Sea, living in the darkness of idolatry, call out for the light of faith—that faith which they were so dearly to prize as the one object of their love and veneration—that faith which they were to vindicate so nobly throughout centuries of persecution—that faith whose gory-stained banner we are privileged to uphold, and which, with God's assistance, we shall transmit unsullied to our children as the dearest heritage of Erin's love. Patrick hears that cry and his heart is moved. Will he fly to their assistance? No, his hour is not yet come. And here we are brought face to face with one of the most wonderful phenomena in the Church's spiritual life—the vocation to the Apostolate.

2. The Apostle, in God's design and providence, is destined to be the spiritual father of the people whom he is called to evangelize. Now, as to physical parentage, there is a law of nature by which the bodily features, the mental cast, and even the spiritual characteristics of parents are transmitted to the children begotten of them; and so in like manner of spiritual parentage. In God's design the characteristics, the spiritual idiosyncrasies of the Apostle are to be imparted to the people he is called on to evangelize; and the higher the vocation to which such a people are called, the nobler and more Divine the qualities of their Apostle are to be.

Patrick is called to be the Apostle of one of the most gifted races that the world has ever known—of a people

with far-reaching traditions, and an old civilization—of a people among whom, from the very first generation of their call to the faith, there should bloom forth a life of high spirituality so rare and excellent that should astonish the world; and who were to be, and this not for one generation only, but to the end of time, the preservers of the Church's spiritual life and Catholicity to all the regions of the earth. He was called to be the spiritual father of a people whose steadfast faith should be to all times a witness to the Divinity of the Church. It was meet, then, that the Apostle of such a race should be a man of rare sanctity and merit. Hence the secret of Patrick's forty years of proximate preparation for the Apostolate of Ireland.

3. It were interesting to follow the career of our saint during those forty years of preparation for the Apostolate of Ireland. During those years he came into contact with some of the most famous men of that wondrous fifth century. In Gaul he watched over the declining years of his great maternal uncle, St. Martin of Tours. He lived on terms of the greatest intimacy with the great light of the Western Church, St. Germain of Auxerre, under whose spiritual guidance he remained for thirty years, and whom he accompanied to Britain in order to put down the growing heresy of Palagianism. He lived in the famous monastery of Marmoutier, on the Loire, founded by his uncle, in company with St. Ninian of Scotland. He made a long sojourn in the isles of the Mediterranean shore—those privileged isles which, from the holy lives of the religious who people them, were called by St. Ambrose "A collar of pearls upon the sea."

While here he was brought into contact with the great

saints Honoratus and Vincent of Lerins, and it was during his sojourn in those isles that he was favored with a vision of our Lord from Whom it is said he received the famous crosier, the "Staff of Jesus," which he ever afterwards carried, and which was held in the greatest veneration by the Church in Ireland for a thousand years, till it was at last destroyed by the English heretics in the sixteenth century.

He witnessed the spiritual life of Rome, and worshiped at its myriad shrines, and saw the places sanctified by the early martyrs. And, lastly, at Ivrea, at the foot of the Alps, a city afterwards greatly favored of Irish saints, he received his episcopal consecration from the hands of St. Maximus of Turin, in the presence of Theodosius II, the emperor of the West, and of the Sovereign Pontiff, St. Celestine the First.

The old lives of the saint tell us that at the moment when Patrick was receiving episcopal consecration, three choirs were heard to join in triumphant response—the choir of the angels in heaven, the choir of the Romans in the church, and the choir of the children from Fuclut wood by the Western sea; and the burden of the chant of each was: "We the children of Erin beseech thee, holy Patrick, to come and walk once more among us and make us free."

And now Patrick, having been raised to the dignity of Patrician, that is, a noble of the Roman empire, he receives his commission to preach the faith in Ireland at the hands of Christ's vicar, and, accompanied by a numerous retinue of priests and clerics, sets out for the isle of his destiny.

Oh, memorable day among the days when Patrick first sets foot on the shores of Ireland; and beautiful upon the

mountains the feet of him who comes to preach the gospel of peace! He had, to be sure, been to Ireland before; but then it was as a slave tending cattle on the Northern mountains. But now he comes, no longer a bondsman, but free, and destined to break the nation's chains; no more a stripling full of anxious fears; but a man in all the glory of a matured intellect and in the strength and fulness of power and jurisdiction. He comes with mind prepared and spirit braced to bear and brave all things, and with heart and soul utterly devoted to God and to the great enterprise before him.

4. Now the conversion of Ireland from the time of St. Patrick's landing to the day of his death, says the great orator, Father Burke, is in many respects the strangest fact in the history of the Church. The saint met with scarcely any opposition. His career resembled the triumphal progress of a king, rather than the difficult labors of a missionary.

The gospel we know with its precepts of self-denial, of prayer, of purity; in a word, of the violence which seizes heaven, is not congenial to fallen man. His pride, his passions, his blindness of intellect and hardness of heart, all oppose the spread of the gospel; so that the very fact that mankind has accepted it so universally is adduced as a proof that it must be from God. Such has it ever been amongst the nations; and, yet, Ireland seems a grand exception. She is perhaps the only country in the world that entirely owes her conversion to one man. He found her universally pagan. He left her universally Christian.

She is again the only nation that never cost her apostle an hour of sorrow, a single tear, a drop of blood. She welcomed him like a friend; took the word from

his lips; made it the leading feature of her life; put it into the blood of her children, and into the language of her most familiar thoughts; and repaid her benefactor with her utmost veneration and love.

III.

Personal Qualities of the Apostle.

1. And much, indeed, had young Christian Ireland to love and venerate in her great apostle. Humble, penitent, prayerful, says Archbishop Healy, and with a burning zeal for souls, he possessed every qualification calculated to compel love and veneration. His humility, and penance shine forth in every page of his writings. When now an old man he wrote that remarkable document, the *Confession,* and in its opening sentences he styles himself the most sinful, the rudest, and least among God's servants. Again, speaking of his past, he says he was a stone sunk in the mire, and that for his sins he was led into captivity. For some indiscretion of his boyhood he was filled with compunction and with a lifelong sorrow. His sin, he said, was always before him, and with the prophet he cried out: "Who will give water to my head and a fountain of tears to my eyes, that I may weep day and night?"

As a result of this state of soul we see him leave memorials wherever he passed of his penance, mortification and prayer. The early lives tell us that though his life was a most laborious one; yet, to the day of his death, he never ate meat of which the people he labored among were so fond. And when preaching in the far west of Ireland he spent a whole Lent in prayer and fasting on the wind-swept summit of Croagh Patrick. On the Northwest again he passed weeks in penance

in Lough Derg—a place ever since known throughout the Christian world as St. Patrick's Purgatory. He himself tells us in the *Confession* that even when a boy slave on the slopes of Slieve Mish he prayed a hundred times by day and as many times by night, in the midst of snow, and frost, and rain, and that he arose to pray before the dawn—a practice that he seems to have preserved during his whole life.

2. As to his zeal for souls, it was a devouring fire that consumed him. For their sake he left friends and country at the call of God. For their sake he relinquished the quiet of monastic life, the halls of sanctity and learning, and crossed the seas to a pagan people, and at an age when other clerics love the ease and comfort of retirement and home. For thirty years he traveled through every corner of the country, fording rivers broad and deep, crossing moor and mountain, in summer's heat and in winter's cold in the inclemency of the Irish climate. And though he settled all his early companions in churches which allowed of comparative ease of life; still he himself followed the rude life of a missioner till he was ninety years of age. And even for the following thirty years which he lived as bishop of the primatial see of Armagh he led a strenuous life consolidating the churches he had won to Christ, and founding schools and monasteries everywhere.

What wonder that at the preaching of such a man the whole nation rose in response, and that, as he tells us, "the sons of the Scots became monks and their daughters in crowds became virgins in Christ, giving up all things for Him"; so that "the men of Erin," he continues, "who before worshiped idols and things unclean, now became the people of the Lord and the children of the living God."

How dearly he loved this flock which he won for Christ at the ends of the earth he shows by word and deed. He would not leave them even for a short time to visit his people, or go to see the places of the saints in Gaul once more. And when some members of his flock were maltreated by the British tyrant Coroticus he bewailed them in the language of a mother robbed of her children, and fiercely denounced the vengeance of God on the tyrant and his accomplices. For their sakes he lived, and for their sakes he was ready to die.

Such was the apostle sent by Pope St. Celestine I and by God's angel Victorinus, as the *Book of Armagh* tells us, to convert our forefathers to the faith. No wonder the fruit was abundant and that the whole nation rose in response to his appeal.

IV.

"The Isle of Saints and Scholars."

1. But even the zeal and the other qualities of the apostle do not supply an adequate cause for the wonderful results that followed. Much was due to the generous ground on which the seed was cast.

The Kelt is by nature poetic, generous, spiritual-minded, warm of heart, a lover of the supernatural and Divine. Hence, when Patrick portrayed the love and the loveliness of the Saviour, and when the people saw the grandeur of the gospel he preached the love and affection of their nature rushed to him with the impetuosity of a mountain torrent. Forthwith the warrior laid down his battleaxe and spear and became a man of peace and prayer. Forthwith the noble maid renounced the trappings of pride and walked forth from her father's hall. Up sprang the monasteries of Erin as at the

touch of a magic wand; over by the lordly Shannon; away South where the Blackwater winds; down through the fairy glens of Munster; in the North by the shores of Neigh and Swilly; amid the rich uplands of Meath; in the wooded glens of Wicklow; everywhere the sound of sacred psalmody was heard. Wonderful power of grace to effect such a revolution!

And the monasteries of Erin were more than shrines of holiness and prayer. They were the halls of science which preserved the learning of antiquity to the world.

At that time a pall of darkness and barbarism lay on the rest of Europe. The Roman empire had persecuted the infant Church, and Providence, to avenge her, led down the barbarians from the North. Goth, and Vandal, and Frank, and Hun, bore down from their northern forests and broke up the rotten fabric of Roman civilization. Where, then, will learning find a home? Must the masterpieces of classic literature, must the treasures of Grecian wisdom perish for evermore?

Not so, my friends; the halls of Armagh, and Clonard, and Lismore, and Clonmacnois, and Bangor, and Glendalough, and a hundred others, are open as a refuge for learning sacred and profane. Ireland was then and for three hundred years the University of Europe. Thither came from Britain and the Continent, aye, and from distant Syria and Egypt, all those who wished to perfect themselves in the science of the saints, or to drink at the fountain of pagan wisdom; and 'twas then that Ireland earned among the nations of the earth the proud title of "the Island of Saints and Scholars."

2. Another and a greater glory still for the Isle of the Saints!

In those dark ages the Church had an arduous task

to accomplish. She had triumphed over the Roman emperors. She must now encounter the rugged barbarians of the north and convert and civilize them. A tremendous task, my friends. Where will Rome turn for apostles? Well she knew where to find generous hearts who would go forth from kindred and home and devote their lives to the propagation of the Gospel. Columba arose, and Columbanus, and Fridolin, and Furzy, and Cuthbert, and Cathal, and Fergel, and Aidan, and Killian, and a host of others, and, as the old Frankish chronicler records, "a whole nation of sages seemed to land on the coasts of Gaul and spread themselves over Europe to convert and civilize it"; so that it has well been said that "for three hundred years the moral and intellectual supremacy of Europe belonged to the Irish missionaries." Nor were the Irish monks mere missionaries who labored personally in the Lord's vineyard and then passed away, leaving but the traces of their presence behind in works of Christian piety and zeal. They were in great part the founders of the monastic system of Western Europe. (See Appendix No. 2, page 310.)

V.

"The Neobé of the Nations."

1. But sad days were in store for this queen of holiness and science. She had worn the crown of sanctity for centuries. Her beauty and her holiness were known and admired both of God and man. But the Lord was resolved that she should wear such a crown of victory as never before was placed on nation's brow, and, therefore, at two distinct periods of her history was she

obliged to meet and conquer a storm of persecution and war unequaled in the world's annals.

The first of these great trials came upon Ireland at the beginning of the ninth century. At that time the Scandinavians from Denmark and Norway invaded the country in mighty force. They had in those centuries conquered England, and Normandy, and all Western Russia. They made incursions on all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, founded powerful kingdoms in Sicily and southern Italy, and sacked central Italy itself even to the walls of Rome, and now they have come on the devoted island in the Atlantic. They came not only as enemies of the Irish nation, but much more of her faith, and hence we find that their most destructive fury was invariably directed against her monasteries and churches.

The gloomy and terrible worship of Odin, and Thor, and Friga, was to replace the religion of Christ, and for three hundred years the whole land was covered with bloodshed and conflagration. For so long the nation fought with heroic courage in defense of home and altar, till at length she rose in her united strength and shook off the pagan and fierce invaders from her virginal bosom and cast them into the sea.

2. But her struggles for the faith of Patrick and of Christ were not yet to end. Another trial terrible and prolonged was awaiting her, and from the second half of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth a persecution for religion's sake, the most ruthless, the most persistent, the most insidious in its diabolical ingenuity that ever shook a nation, swept over the shores of Ireland, so that the whole land was deluged in the blood of martyrs.

I need not go into the painful history of the past four hundred years to prove this. The world admits it and cries shame on the cruel nation that was guilty of the crime. But I may give you one or two instances or references, and from them you can infer the fierceness of the struggle of your ancestors for the faith.

Lord Deputy Chichester, himself one of the most ruthless and insidious persecutors of the Irish Catholics, writing early in the reign of James I, says: "I know not how attachment to the Church is so deeply rooted in the hearts of the Irish, unless it be that the very soil is infiltered and the very air tainted with Popery. For, they obstinately prefer it to anything else . . . to the care of their own property, and to all their hopes and prospects."

Lord Gosford, as late as the year 1796, said: "A persecution accompanied with all the circumstances of ferocious cruelty is now waging in this country.

"Neither age, nor sex, nor even acknowledged innocence, can excite mercy. The only crime which the wretched objects are charged with is the profession of the Roman Catholic faith." And in 1798, Lord Cornwallis, the same who surrendered to Washington at Yorktown, which ended the war of Independence, said: "that the conversation at his table always turned on hanging, shooting, burning, etc., and if a priest is put to death the greatest joy is expressed by the whole company."

3. Here, too, are one or two instances, and they refer to the religious Order to which I belong and to the habit which I wear. For the Dominicans of those days—all honor to them, as well as to the other religious bodies resident in Ireland—led their people bravely and met

the brunt of the persecution. Well, the annals of our Order attest that at the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth the Dominicans counted seven hundred members in Ireland. Will it be believed at the end of her reign, in 1603, the same Order counted only four members?

Again, and we have the authentic account of the General Chapter of our Order held in Rome in 1664 to attest, that of the six hundred Dominicans who peopled the various Dominican monasteries in Ireland in 1650, that is to say, fifteen years previously, only a hundred and fifty were then alive. In the twelve or fourteen years of Cromwellian rule no less than four hundred and fifty were killed off by persecution, and of the remaining hundred and fifty the greater part were in exile in foreign countries or wearing out their lives as slaves to the British and Dutch planters in Virginia and the West Indian isles.

Such may be looked on as an indication of the persecution suffered by the Irish people for the faith for three hundred years at the hands of the English heretics.

I need not refer to the indirect persecution for the faith sustained by your immediate forbears in the middle of the last century. When God visited His people with a terrible calamity and gaunt famine stalked over the land there was food in abundance for the people, but that food they could partake of only at the cost of the religion that they loved. And rather than touch the defiled meats presented to their famished lips they died of hunger by the roadside in hundreds of thousands; or they crossed the wide ocean and faced the uncertainties of life in, for them, a far foreign land, the noble confessors of the religion of Jesus Christ.

4. O my friends, you will bear with me when I say to the men and women of the Irish race here present, be proud of those noble men and women, some of them your own fathers and mothers, who built up the Church of the living God throughout the length and breadth of this noble land. "Look unto the rock whence you are hewn, the hole of the pit from which you are dug out," and if material prosperity smile on you today, remember that they transmitted to you a heritage more precious far than all the gold of California—the priceless pearl of faith inherited through fifty generations. For this your ancestors fought; for this they struggled through long centuries of oppression, and with sacrifices the like of which the world had never known before.

As then you are children of the unconquered and unconquerable Irish race, be ye also children of Patrick, our great father in the faith. Practise the virtues taught you through the centuries of our history, and carry out the great mission given by God to our people, to be the propagators of the faith and the builders of the Church throughout all the new lands that modern enterprise has won to civilization. Cultivate, I say, the virtues that have characterized the people of our race in the past, and while loving this fair land of your birth or adoption, forget not that you are the inheritors of a glorious past, where fidelity to religion, purity, holiness, and love of God and country shine as a crown of light around the fair brows of the cradle land of your race, the Isle of martyrs, saints, apostles, holy Ireland.

FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH.

FIRST SERMON: ST. JOSEPH.

"Hail, holy Joseph, hail!
Father of Christ esteemed;
Father, be thou to those
Thy Foster Son redeemed."

The Just Man.

1. Introduction. The celebrating the praises of St. Joseph, a grateful theme to both preacher and congregation. Difficulty in elaborating a discourse in praise of him by reason of the meager account given of his life, whether in Scripture or tradition. This deficiency more than made up for by reason of the unique capacity in which the Gospel introduces him to us.

2. His pre-eminent sanctity shown from the dignity conferred on him by God. This dignity compared with those to which the angels and priests have been raised.

3. The same sanctity shown from the sublime functions he discharged. Those functions compared with those of the prophets, Jeremias, Isaias, and St. John the Baptist.

4. His pre-eminent holiness shown from the tender and intimate relations he had with our Lord. These relations reviewed. His praises sung in the liturgy of the Church and in Scriptures.

5. A survey of his life shows him to be pre-eminently the saint after God's own heart, the saint who came closest to our Lord in every attribute of sanctity.

6. Appeal.

The Just Man.

1. The feast we celebrate today, and the whole month alike, invite me to address you some words in praise of the holy Patriarch, St. Joseph. And I do so the more willingly as I know that my theme is one that commends itself to you all. For, where is the true Catholic to be found nowadays who has not a devotion to St. Joseph, and who does not look up to him with a childlike trust and confidence?

But now I find myself at the outset confronted with

a difficulty from the meager account left us, whether in the Gospels or in the tradition of the Church, concerning the details of his life. This deficiency, however, is more than made up for by the unique capacity in which he is presented to us in the Gospel—as foster-father of our Lord, Jesus Christ. For, when God raises up any one to an office of singular eminence in the hierarchy of beings, and when, moreover, He commends that personage, as He does St. Joseph, for the faithful discharge of the functions of that office, it is a certain proof of his, or her, pre-eminent sanctity and excellence.

2. But, O my brethren, what an honor is this that is conferred on our saint that he should be made the reputed father of Jesus Christ? What a dignity to which a creature has been raised, that he should be constituted, as the Office of the Church says of him, "head of the sacred household," and guardian of the Son of God made Man. All dignities that can be conferred, save that to which the ever blessed Mother of God was raised, pale and vanish before this.

We venerate the holy angels who are constituted princes of the heavenly court, and who stand in the presence of the Most High to praise Him and to execute His will. We celebrate in a special manner the memory of the archangel Gabriel, to whom was entrusted the high mission of announcing to the Blessed Virgin the mystery of the Incarnation. We honor the Order of the Priesthood to which was given power to forgive sins, and to consecrate the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

But what a dignity is this, O glorious saint, to which you are called, that you should stand in the place of

the Eternal Father Himself and command, as if He were your own son, the Son of the Eternal God?

3. And who is there that considers the sublime functions that St. Joseph discharged as foster-father of Jesus Christ that does not recognize in him a man of pre-eminent sanctity? If God, when he designed Jeremias to announce His law to the people and to preach to them penance for their sins, prepared him for this high function by sanctifying him while yet in his mother's womb, how must he not have prepared and sanctified St. Joseph, whom He designed from all eternity to be the foster-father of His Son made Man? If the lips of Isaias were purified with a burning coal from the altar that he might announce to the people the mystery of the Passion, how must not God have purified the lips and heart of St. Joseph, of him from whose mouth should come forth commands to the same God Incarnate, and whose soul should be moulded to carry within it a paternal love for Jesus Christ? If St. John the Baptist, at the sound of the words of the holy Mother and by the mere presence of Jesus Christ, was, at the Visitation, instantly sanctified, how holy must not be made St. Joseph, who for thirty years listened to the words of wisdom coming from the lips of Jesus Christ, and who for so long a time dwelt in His hallowed presence?

4. And, in reality, if we consider one by one the relations which St. Joseph was privileged to hold with the Son of God, we shall be the more astonished that any such Divine familiarity was permitted to a creature. The Gospel tells us that "Jesus was subject to him." Could anything better convey to us the trust He reposed in him, the immense love He bore him, or the veneration in which He held him? "He was subject to him"

as to a father. He obeyed his every command. He looked up to him with the same love and reverence that a child looks up to its natural parent.

And what was the mutual interchange of affection between these two hearts during the years that they spent together in the house of Nazareth? When Jesus was still a Child, Joseph encircled Him in his arms and pressed Him to his heart. It was his strong arm that procured food for Him, his God. And when our Lord grew up to boyhood, St. Joseph it was who taught Him His trade. They labored together in the workshop, and they prayed together to the Father in the privacy of their holy home. How must not grace have accumulated in the soul of the holy Patriarch during those long years of intimate union with Him Who is the source of grace! And to what sanctity must he not have attained, since perfection is achieved by the exercise of God's holy presence!

The Church praises him as the "faithful and prudent servant whom the Lord hath set over His household." Now, we know on the authority of the Fathers of the Church that fidelity is the great human agency by means of which we are enriched with sanctity and merit. For, each work done faithfully in correspondence with grace, causes greater and still more abundant grace to descend from the treasury of God. And prudence, also, we are taught, is the special gift of the Holy Spirit to him who is faithful to grace already given. And has not Scripture itself canonized the holy Patriarch when it says that "St. Joseph was a just man"? Now, justice in the sense of holy Scripture, signifies absolute perfection. What wonder, then, that he should have been honored with angelic communications, as the Gospel tells us that he was in many well-known passages, or that God the

Father should have thrown around his actions the shield of the Divine protection?

5. Who can contemplate such a life and not be filled with admiration and gratitude to God, Who thus ennobles our race with such a prodigy of virtue? Whether we consider him in the carpenter's shop, his lips giving issue to the canticle of prayer that rises from his heart; or kneeling by the crib of Bethlehem amid the throng of adoring angels; or carrying the Infant Saviour in his arms a fugitive from Herod's fury; or taking shelter under the shadow of the palm tree in a heathen land, relying on the providence of God alone; or, again, if we consider him, after years of exile, returning to his home with Jesus and Mary; or seeking in the anguish of a father's heart his lost Son left behind in the temple; or, if we contemplate him passing those years of prayer and silent labor during which he became the model of the spiritual life; or, finally, dying in the arms of Jesus and Mary; does not his whole career emit an aroma of sanctity to be met with in the life of no other saint, and does it not appeal to us most powerfully to lead a life of virtue? Yes, dearly beloved, St. Joseph is pre-eminently the saint after God's own Heart—the saint who appears to have copied more closely than any other the virtues of his Divine Foster Son, and to have come closest to Him in every attribute of sanctity.

Let us venerate, then, the great saint whose virtues we have been contemplating, and let us pay him the homage of our love and confidence. And since he has been raised up to be a model to us in every virtue, let us try to imitate him, especially in his love and devotion to Jesus Christ, our Saviour, that so we may

one day like him enjoy the light of the Divine Essence and obtain the fruition of eternal life with God.

SECOND SERMON.

The Patron.

1. Introduction. It is God's providential design that the saints be for us not only our models, but also our patrons and advocates before His throne in heaven.

St. Joseph's three-fold relation to us as our spiritual director, as our advocate to obtain for us a happy death, and as our patron in all our needs.

2. The need we have of a spiritual director in life. St. Joseph's qualifications to act in this capacity.

3. Realization of the stern ordeal of death before each of us. St. Joseph, our helper at that momentous hour.

4. The saint, a patron in every need. St. Teresa's exhortation.

Appeal.

The Patron.

1. It is among the mysterious ways of God's providence that a soul which has attained to an eminent degree of sanctity be raised to be not only a model for our imitation, but also our patron and advocate before the throne of mercy. This is especially the case with St. Joseph, whom our Lord has wished to honor by giving him to us as our director in life, our advocate before His throne in heaven, and our patron in all emergencies and vicissitudes of life. To us, therefore, St. Joseph should be beyond all other saints most dear because of those holy relations we have with him.

Let us venerate him in this threefold capacity today.

2. First, I say St. Joseph has been given to us as

our spiritual director. My brethren, we have all many difficulties to contend with in the spiritual life. In this life we have to travel by ways new and unknown to us. Our path, besides, is beset with snares and pitfalls, into which, unhappily, only too many stumble. Within we have to contend with powerful and treacherous passions; without we are beset with strong and crafty enemies. "Our warfare is not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, the rulers of this world of darkness." How shall we, poor, frail creatures, escape so many dangers? We have need of a wise and prudent director, who may guide our steps and point out to us the secure way. And who so proper to discharge this office in our behalf as this great saint? Whilst on earth he was the guardian of the Infant Saviour. In fulfilling this office many were the difficulties he had to contend with, coming as well from the wickedness of men as from the powers of hell. And prudently did he guard the treasure committed to him, rescuing his dear Foster-Child alike from the machinations of a perfidious king and the slanders of a wicked world; and it was the remembrance of this great trust that he discharged while on earth that moved the Church at a time when she was sorely beset by her enemies to commit to him the highest charge that was ever given to any saint, that of guardian of the universal Church and director of her destinies.

Moreover, our saint practised, while on earth, the highest virtues of the spiritual life. He trod the giddy heights. He was admitted to the closest intimacy with the Saviour. He knows, then, all the subtle ways of drawing souls to God, and of teaching them to advance, with unfaltering steps, to the sublimest heights of sanc-

tity. Go, then, to this true director of souls. Entrust yourselves fearlessly to his keeping; and devote yourselves to him as his pupils all the days of your pilgrimage here below.

3. But St. Joseph has not only been given us as our director during life. He is, moreover, our advocate in death.

Brethren, we are all doomed one day to die. A day shall come when each one of us will be brought face to face with that grim messenger who shall come to summon us out of life. The supreme hour of our existence will have arrived, when we shall stand in the balance of Divine Justice. And, Oh, who can contemplate without emotion that dread moment which shall decide our fate for eternity? A life of everlasting enjoyment with God or a living death forever in the abode of misery. The devils will at that moment put forth every effort to decide our lot for hell. They will gather around our death-bed to assault us with every species of temptation. We have need, then, of a powerful advocate who will come to our assistance in that hour. And this we have in St. Joseph, and as such the Church has recognized him in all ages. He, himself, during life, overcame all the forces of Satan, and so merited to die in the arms of Jesus and Mary; and this is why he has always been venerated as the advocate of a happy death. Invite him, then, while still in the midst of health, to be with you at your dying hour, to allay the difficulties that shall then confront you. Let the frequent invocation of his name create in you a habit, so that in time of danger it may become as natural to you to invoke him as to breathe.

4. Finally, St. Joseph is a universal patron of souls, for the obtaining of every help from Heaven. This

is the testimony of all those who have had devotion to him. They say that never did they invoke the holy patriarch in vain, and that in every necessity of life he powerfully assisted them. "Never do I remember to have asked any favor of St. Joseph that he did not grant," says St. Teresa. And, she continues, "the Lord appears to have given power to other saints to assist us in our single necessities; but experience shows us that St. Joseph gives us aid in all." "The Lord gives us to understand that as He wished to be subject to St. Joseph on earth, so, in heaven, He does whatever the saint asks." "I would wish all," she concludes, "to be devoted to St. Joseph, because I have long experienced the great favors that he obtained for me from God. I have never known any soul particularly devoted to the saint who did not always advance in virtue."

Consecrate yourselves, then, dearly beloved, to the holy patriarch. Ask of him help in all your needs. Choose him as your director in the path of virtue. Frequently invoke him to be with you at your death. You may be certain of the issue, if, at that tremendous hour, you confidently call upon him. May it be so with you, and may the last words that issue from your lips be an invocation of the name of St. Joseph, associated with the saving names of Jesus and Mary.

THIRD SERMON: ST. JOSEPH.

"Joseph, the husband (of Mary), was a just man."—Matt i, 19.

I.

1. The part which the Eternal Father gave to St. Joseph in the economy of the Incarnation, of itself ought to convince us of his pre-eminent holiness. He was the depository of the secrets of God, was allied to the purest of Virgins, chosen to be the foster-father of Jesus Christ.

2. A second proof of his holiness is the power which he exercised over the Son of the Most High. His power so much excelled that of Josue, and as it was wielded, not over the things of nature, but over the God of nature.

III.

1. His virtues are reflected on, and first, his humility. Though of the line of David, he was content with practising an obscure trade. This same virtue of humility caused him to blot out of his mind his many virtues. He showed no desire even to have part in the glorious deeds of his Foster-Son.

2. His love of poverty, not less remarkable. Proofs.

3. His obedience not less worthy of our admiration: as, witness his promptness to fly into Egypt, etc.

4. His faith and trust in God shines out resplendent through all the vicissitudes of his life.

5. We might dilate on his fervor and perseverance in prayer, since he conversed with God, not for forty days, as Moses, but for the space of thirty entire years. Appeal.

I.

1. Even though the Gospel had not told us that St. Joseph was a just man, and a saint by excellence, the part which the Eternal Father gave him in the economy of the Incarnation ought to convince us of it. He was the depository of the secrets of the Most High, and he merited to be instructed from heaven on the ineffable mystery of the love of a God towards men. It is this privileged man who received the grace from the Lord to be united by the closest of all ties to the most pure, the most holy, the most perfect of creatures.

"What an alliance!" says the devout Gerson. "It is a virginity that is united to another virginity." These are two creatures of whom the Holy Ghost, the personal love of the Father and of the Son, in eternity, becomes, so to speak, the love and the conjugal bond, in time. They are two mysterious lilies in the midst of whom the Spouse takes His repose and His nourish-

ment. They are two stars who look towards each other only to increase the brilliancy and the purity of their light. Mary is the most pure of all virgins, and Joseph, the most chaste of all spouses, is the witness, the guardian, and the protector of her virginity. He was chosen by a special favor to be the foster-father of Jesus Christ, and the protector of His infancy—a quality which lifts him as much above the angels as the name with which he is honored is more excellent than theirs. They are only ministers of the Lord, of whom he is called the father. He was judged worthy of a glory so much greater than that of Moses, as that lawgiver had charge of God's people, whilst Joseph had charge of the Son of God Himself. "Moses was only a simple servant in the house of God," as St. Paul tells us. Joseph was constituted master of it, with a full authority. He transports the Ark of the New alliance according to His divers needs. He holds in his hands the pledge of the salvation and of the Redemption of men. Must the Child Jesus be carried into Egypt? Must He return into Judea? Joseph alone is charged with this glorious but perilous commission. He had the privilege of sustaining so precious a life by the labor of his hands and the sweat of his brow. His arms provided for the subsistence of the Word made Flesh.

2. But it is little that Providence laid on Joseph, the charge over the care of Jesus. Behold something more surprising! All power is given him over the Most High. People regarded it as a great prodigy that the sun stopped for once and on one occasion at the voice of Josue! and behold the Creator of the sun and the Master of Josue for thirty years obeyed Joseph. We wonder again that the patriarch, Joseph, passed from

the prison to the height of honors, and that all Egypt was submissive to him; but what is such an authority in comparison to that which the second Joseph exercises over the Master of the world, and over the King of kings? "That a man should give commands to God," says St. Bernard, "is a sublimity without par; that God should obey a man is a humility without example." We honor you, O admirable saint, for such rare privileges, for the sacred commerce which you had with Jesus and Mary. Grant that, by your means, we may be found and united intimately with the same Divine Saviour and His holy Mother.

II.

1. Let us not be content with admiring the greatness and power of St. Joseph; let us consider his virtues, which ought to render him still more venerable in our eyes. He received them through the channel and ministry of Mary, who was in some sort in the order of grace, the head who shed an influence over him, although he was her head, according to the law of nature.

Humility, which is as "the virginity of the soul," according to St. Augustine, and which had in Mary so great a merit before the Most High, and set off in her the splendor of her unspotted purity, was eminent in St. Joseph. He blotted out from his memory that long line of patriarchs, of judges, of kings, from whom he was descended, to look upon himself only as a poor workman, a man of the dregs of the people, or, rather, the least of men. Content with an obscure condition which appeared insupportable to others, he would not have changed the instruments of his trade for scepters and crowns. But what is still more admirable, he blotted out from his mind so many holy actions, so

many virtues with which he was adorned, and which rendered him in the eyes of God greater than Solomon. He occupied himself only with his nothingness and his spiritual needs. He followed Jesus Christ in His exile, in His persecutions, and in His hidden life; but we do not see that he wished to have the least part in the glory of the miracles of this Divine Saviour, and in His most striking actions.

2. His love of poverty is not less remarkable. In the whole course of his life, he suffered all the inconveniences of it without ever complaining. Very far from considering himself miserable in the midst even of his misery, he esteems himself too happy in not having whereon to lay his head. He blessed God without ceasing at being thus able to honor the poverty of Jesus, Who, enjoying all the riches of glory, was made poor for love of us.

3. His obedience is not less worthy of our admiration. He hesitates not a single moment to execute the orders of His God, although very severe and rigorous; as, when he had to rise at midnight, to pass through the midst of Herod's guards, and fly into a strange and idolatrous land. What replies would not have made a spirit less submissive? How can I go without provision? without conveyance? without any means? among a barbarous people? in the roughest season of the year? with a tender girl and a new-born Child? The same obedience made him return into Judea in spite of the fear of Archelaus, the son of the tyrant, a man as cruel as his father. O prompt and perfect obedience, how you condemn our resistance to the orders of God, our murmurs, and all the vain pretexts we employ to cover our cowardice, and color our prevarications!

4. What shall we now say of the greatness of his faith? What faith would not have been shaken when he was told to take the Child and His Mother, and to fly at once into Egypt? If he had consulted the lights of the human mind, how would they not have put obstacles in the way of executing an order which appeared so strange? Well, now, would we not have said, were we in his place, this miraculous Child comes to save men, and now, behold, others have to save Him! His lively and enlightened faith showed him in a moment what more than three years of instruction in the school of Jesus Christ was not able to make the apostles conceive, that it was by humiliations and sufferings that the Son of God came to save His people.

5. What could we not add concerning his fervor and perseverance in prayer? But how could weak and carnal eyes such as ours look upon this earthly seraph who conversed with his God, not during forty days, as Moses, but during the space of thirty years? Let us content ourselves with asking humbly of God that He would give us some part of his virtues, and let us consider that we have the happiness of possessing Jesus Christ in the Eucharist in a manner still more intimate than St. Joseph possessed Him on earth. Oh, how happy would we be if we knew how to esteem this precious treasure, and preserve it with the same care as he! Pray God that He would give you this grace. Live to this effect as St. Joseph lived in the forgetfulness of the world, that you may occupy yourself only with Jesus Christ.

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION.

THE INCARNATION.

"And the angel said to her: 'Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David, His father, and He shall reign in the house of Jacob forever. And of His kingdom there shall be no end." . . . And Mary said: 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word.' And the angel departed from her."—Luke i, 30-38.

1. Introduction. The mystery of the Incarnation was prepared by God from all eternity and accomplished in time as the masterpiece of His Wisdom and of His love for us. Its purpose was that the Incarnate Word might redeem us by His death upon the Cross. In the consideration of this mystery three great truths are revealed by us. 1st., the abasement of the Divine Word; 2d., the exaltation of Mary; 3d., the love of God for us.

2. This abasement described by St. Paul as an annihilation: "He emptied himself." The same idea contained in St. John: "The Word was made flesh." Amplification. Such abasement on the part of our Lord compels our adoration, nay, our imitation of Him by humbling ourselves on account of our past sins.

3. In the same mystery Mary is lifted to the greatest height of dignity and honor possible to a creature, since she is made Mother, Spouse, and Temple of God.

4. This abasement and this elevation were designed by God solely in favor of us.

By means of these we are given: 1st,, in God, a Father; 2d., in Jesus Christ, a Saviour; 3d., in Mary, a Mother.

Appeal.

1. We commemorate today a mystery, the greatest that has been accomplished since time began, the mystery, namely, of the Incarnation of our Lord, Jesus Christ. It is a mystery which God in the depths of His councils had prepared from all eternity, and which He has accomplished in time as the masterpiece of His wisdom and love.

And if you ask what was the purpose of this stupendous mystery, since with intelligent beings the end is the first thing that comes under consideration, I answer with the holy Doctor St. Thomas of Aquin: "It was in order that the Son of God might redeem us by His death upon the Cross." Of this holy Scripture assures us, saying: "God so loved the world as to give for us His Only Son." And the same answer the Church echoes in her creed: "Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, became Incarnate by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man."

Now, in the consideration of this mystery three great truths present themselves to us—truths so great, mysteries so redolent of the wisdom and goodness of God, that not even eternity is sufficient to fully comprehend their greatness; and these are—the abasement of the Divine Word; the exaltation of Mary; and the love of God for us—love which has devised this abasement and this exaltation solely for our benefit.

2. And, first, the abasement of the Divine Word in the Incarnation. How great that abasement was, no human tongue can declare; no created mind can conceive. The apostle St. Paul, in an effort to describe the depth of the abasement, says that the Son of God emptied Himself. "He emptied Himself taking the form of man." And no better description could be given; for, the Divine Word truly divested Himself of all but His Godhead in assuming our nature. And St. John, treating of the same mystery, after giving a noble description of the Word, or the Son of God, "Who," he says, "was from all eternity in the bosom of the Father, and was Himself the very God, the Creator of

the universe, and was in possession of a glory such as belongs only to the Only Begotten of the Father!" St. John, I say, makes a paradox in saying that "the Word was made Flesh."

No, dearly beloved, thought cannot bridge the abyss that yawns between the greatness of God, on the one hand, and the littleness of man, on the other. Only the description of the apostle can suffice: "God emptied Himself." He emptied Himself of His greatness; of His dignity; of His happiness; of His riches; of His glory; in taking the form of man. He emptied Himself even to the taking on Himself all our miseries, if you except ignorance and sin. There is no form of weakness, or want, or infirmity, or persecution, or sorrow, which the Son of God did not subject Himself to as Man. "For, we have a High Priest Who was tempted in all things like us; yet without sin," says St. Paul. And if it was forbidden the Son of God to take upon Himself the character of personal sinfulness, yet would He charge Himself with the obligation of paying the penalty of our sins. The irreconcilable enemy of sin takes it upon Himself to resemble the sinner, to pass for a sinner, to be treated as a sinner, to die as a sinner. Oh, abyss of humiliation well calculated to cure us of our pride! Unfathomable love of a God Who annihilates Himself in becoming Man in order that He might suffer and die for man! Oh, let us adore Jesus Christ annihilated in the Incarnation for our sakes; and let us further imitate His annihilation by humbling ourselves on account of our past sins.

3. But if the Son of God could not abase Himself lower than He did in the Incarnation, Mary could not

be lifted to a greater height of dignity and honor than that to which the Incarnation raised her. This the words of the angel made known to us. "Behold," says he. "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be (called) the Son of the Most High. And the Lord, God, shall give unto Him the throne of David, His Father, and He shall reign in the house of Jacob forever; and of His Kingdom there shall be no end. . . . And the mystery shall be accomplished in this manner: the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee; and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And, therefore, the Holy that shall be born of thee shall be (called) the Son of God."

Could greater honor be conferred on creature? In fact, by the Incarnation Mary is raised to the quality of Spouse of God, Who associates her to His own immortal fecundity in order to cause her to engender in time the same Son Whom the Father had begotten for all eternity. She is raised to the quality of Mother of God, who wishes to owe to her His temporal existence, and to give her over His august Person all the rights and all the advantages of a mother. She is raised to the quality of Temple of God—temple beloved—temple adorned with all gifts, and worthy dwelling-place of the Divinity, Who takes up His dwelling corporally within her. What prodigious elevation!—elevation capable of attracting all our homage, and all our love and confidence. Oh, let us, therefore, as the fruit of the contemplation of this mystery, reverence the ever Blessed Virgin, Mary. And since God has been pleased to honor her beyond all thought and measure, and to raise her to a dignity ineffable, let our praise, and our homage, and

our love and confidence in Mary be great and boundless also.

4. And whilst we show our homage and love for Mary, let us pour forth unceasingly our gratitude to God, Who devised both the abasement of His Son and her exaltation solely in favor of us; and this is the third great truth that comes before us prominently in the contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation.

Yes, "God so loved the world as to give for its salvation His only Son." How great are the benefits we receive through the accomplishment of this mystery—benefits so great, gifts so wonderful, that greater, even at the hands of God, could not be conceived.

By means of it, first of all, we are given God as a Father. What an extraordinary change! "We were by nature," says St. Paul, "children of wrath." Well, from being "children of wrath" we became the children of God by adoption. And this is what excited the admiration of St. John. "Behold," says he, "what manner of charity the Father hath for us that we should be called and should be in reality the children of God." And if children, why "heirs also; heirs of God and co-heirs with Jesus Christ?"

By means of the Incarnation again we are given in Jesus Christ a Saviour. We have henceforth a Victim and a Liberator Who comes to satisfy for us, and to acquit us of our debts by paying for them in His own Person.

The mysteries of the Incarnation and of the Crucifixion form, as it were, but one episode—"The Son of God made Man in order to Redeem the world." The work of the Redemption was begun at the Incarnation.

The second birth of the human race took place on Calvary.

By means of the Incarnation, finally, we are given in Mary a Mother to replace our first mother, Eve, who had by her folly brought destruction on her whole posterity. We should have all been lost if a second Woman had not been found to restore to life those whom the first woman had plunged into the abyss of death. It is through the Incarnation that the Mother of Jesus Christ is made the "Mother of all the living." It is for them that she attracts, that she conceives, that she carries in her chaste womb the Fruit of Salvation.

Oh, how beneficent to us the mystery of the Incarnation; and how capable of gaining for Jesus Christ the gratitude of our hearts and all our love.

Let it be our unceasing duty to aspire after, to strive for, and to merit the benefits offered to us through this mystery.

FEAST OF ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA.

PANEGYRIC.

"The foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are contemptible hath God chosen, and the things that are not, that He might bring to naught the things that are; that no flesh should glory in His sight.—I Cor., i, 27-29.

I.

The Saint's Interior Life.

1. Introduction. Observation, that when God would bring about great and astonishing results in the world He usually employs weak instruments to carry out His designs. Examples given. Signal example of St. Catherine of Siena, through whose exalted virtues He in the fourteenth century brought about the most astonishing results of glory and reformation in the Church.

2. Catherine's childhood signalized by the practice of great and heroic virtues. Her Espousals. She receives the sacred stigmata.

II.

Her Great Works.

1. Wonderful results of her apostolate in Tuscany. Testimonies of Blessed Raymond, Blessed John Dominic, and the Venerable Carthusans.

2. The Turks threaten the subjugation of Europe. The impotence of the Christian princes. The new Peter the Hermit.

3. The Pope driven into exile. Sad state of Rome described. The ambassador of Florence. Her appearance before Gregory. Peace is established.

4. She brings back the Pope to Rome. Pageant of his return.

5. Catherine the peacemaker. Her courage in face of danger. She sustains the true Pope, Urban VI. Her sublime treatises on the Interior life. Her death.

I.

The Saint's Interior Life.

1. It has been observed that when God would bring

about some great and astonishing results in the world, when He would work out some mighty revolution in the thoughts and in the lives of men, He usually selects weak instruments, according to the world's estimation, with which to carry out His designs—and this, in order that, to use the words of the apostle: "no flesh should glory in His sight," but that all the merit of the work might be ascribed to Him alone.

Thus, when He would deliver the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt, and make them a great and powerful nation, He seeks out, to effect this work, a poor shepherd who has spent half his life in the desert.

Again, when His people are sore beset by the Assyrians, their inveterate enemies, He employs the weak hand of a woman, the incomparable Judith, to deliver them and send their enemies flying among the hills.

Do His people fall away from the faith and piety of their fathers? Do they transgress His laws and fall into impiety and crime? He calls up a man from the wilderness; it may be an Elias, or a Joel, or an Amos, endows him with a Divine spirit and power, and through him and at his call, brings them back to their duty and repentance. And, not to multiply examples, when the Son of God Incarnate would change the face of the earth; when He would destroy the ancient superstitions and establish in their place a religion opposed to the passions, to the prejudices, to the thoughts and conveniences of men from time immemorial, He goes down to the sea shore and seeks out some poor fishermen, and says to them: "Leave your nets and your tackle, and come and follow Me and I will make you fishers of men." And through these men He brings about such a change in the minds and in the manners of men as had not been seen since the beginning of the world.

Yes, truly, "the foolish things of the world hath God chosen that He may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen that He may confound the strong; and the base things of the world and the things that are contemptible hath God chosen; and the things that are not, that He might bring to naught the things that are; that no flesh should glory in His sight."

Thoughts like these come spontaneously to our minds, when we reflect on the life and actions of the great Saint, whose festival brings to a close this beautiful and auspicious month.

Who among mankind more foolish according to the world's estimation; who more weak and contemptible than this illiterate virgin of Siena? And, yet, through the labors, and still more through the prayers and good example of St. Catherine, such results were brought about in the Church and in the manners and lives of clergy and people as none of the great statesmen and prelates of her time could have achieved.

And how is this? It is because the Almighty saw in her a fitting instrument for the working out of His great designs for the well-being of the Church, and for the reformation of society.

Catherine's Youth.

2. And now as to the manner of life led by St. Catherine, and the heroic virtues practised by her, time permits me to give only their more salient features.

Catherine was the youngest of twenty-five children born of Joakim and Lapa, of the family of the Benincasa of Siena.

As a little girl she appeared to be different from all her

companions and to have acquired a spirit of discretion and piety superior to her years. She was as one nourished with celestial love, living on prayer, and contemplating in ecstacy the secrets of heaven.

While yet a child the attraction of prayer urged her to seek, like the hermits of old, the solitude of the desert. She cut her long and lovely tresses for fear of being loved with a profane love, and burned with a desire of going forth under the semblance of an apostle to evangelize the world.

In addition, she practised the greatest austerities. She clothed herself with sackcloth, nourished herself with but a little bread, and gave to the poor all she had, even her own garments. Her singular method of life brought upon her the reproaches and harsh treatment of her family. But her patience and constancy enabled her in the end to triumph over all; and with the consent of her parents she was permitted to receive the holy habit of the Sisters of Penance of St. Dominic while yet in her fifteenth year. Such was the life of Catherine in her youthful years.

But who shall picture that life of combat and trial, of ecstatic love and glorious triumph, and of agonizing conflict with the powers of darkness, which Catherine lived in those years when she led a life hidden from the world?

She herself, under the obedience of her confessors, Friar Thomas and Blessed Raymond of Capua, has been obliged to give for the edification of all after ages the history of those interior trials and joys of her most wonderful and crucified life.

He, then, who would lift the veil of the hidden life of Catherine would perceive sweet raptures, heavenly

splendors, visions of angelic beauty, mingled with profound darknesses, agonizing conflicts, assaults of devils, horrid tempests, and anxieties, and tears, and spasms, more bitter than death. He would perceive her, at one time, conversing joyfully with the saints, with the angels, with Mary, with Jesus; at another, prostrate on the bare ground, covered with sweat and blood, prolong prayer, and watching, and scourging of her innocent body.

Her Espousals.

Presently the heavens are unveiled before the face of Catherine; the angelic hosts deploy in two great wings in the immense expanse of the firmament. An ocean of light spreads over the earth and unites it with heaven. The heavens give forth sweet songs of jubilee, and strains of melodious music. It is the day of the nuptials of the Son of God! His spouse is already prepared. Behold her! She is clothed in white and resplendent garments. A royal garland of pearls interlaced with lilies and roses crowns her snowy brow and golden hair. What peace and joy in her beautiful, expressive eyes! What a sweet smile plays about her rosy lips! What heavenly joy on that face! The rays of the Divinity are reflected on those features rendered more beautiful by the bashful modesty of the virgin.

Before her is seated on a splendid throne the great Mother of God. St. John, St. Paul, the patriarch, St. Dominic, and all the blessed spirits surround her as a crown, and David sings to his harp the marriage hymn. Then "The most Beautiful amongst the sons of Men," with a countenance radiant with all the beauty of the Son of God, approaches the holy virgin of Siena, and

places on her finger the nuptial ring. Catherine is espoused to Jesus! The espousal with the God of the two testaments associates her with Him in the great designs He conceives for the reform of the church and of the world.

The Stigmata.

Nor is this all: for shortly after she receives a new consecration which clothes her with a Divine power and dignity.

Whilst wrapt in ecstacy in the church of St. Christina, in Pisa, she is seen to compose herself so as to extend her arms in the form of a cross. Her countenance shines with an angelic beauty. Her eyes closed, her head sweetly inclined, her breast heaving. Then struck with a mystical dart she falls headlong to the pavement and remains in a swoon. And when she arises there appear on her hands, and on her feet, and on her side, the stigmata of the Crucified. O holy wounds graven on the body of our saint! You are the symbol and the proof of the association of love and of suffering of Catherine with the Saviour. And, dear saint, can you not now say with the apostle: "Let no man henceforth be troublesome to me; for I bear the stigmata of my Lord, Jesus Christ upon my body." And "far from me be it to glory in anything save in the cross of my Lord, Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified to me and I to the world."

From that hour she commenced to live the most privileged of all lives, viz., of association in the sufferings of her Spouse; so that she could say with the Apostle: "I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me;" and "I am filled with consolation. I superabound with joy in all my tribulations."

Thus consecrated as the spouse of Him "Who feedeth among the lilies"; bearing the mystic ring of Divine consecration on her finger; carrying the sacred stigmata graven on her body; suffering over again in her members the dolors of the Passion; is it any wonder to see Catherine go forth on her Master's business the wonder and the portent of her age? Lifted superior to her sex, she from that day entered on an apostleate in the Church of God never before or since entrusted to a woman.

II.

Her Great Works.

1. At the inspiration of God she goes forth from her father's house and from the privacy of her cell, preaching to the people and calling on them to lay aside their angers and their strifes, and to return to the ways of penance with sincerity of heart. And with results that are astonishing!

Blessed Raymond of Capua, her confessor, a man of great learning and holiness, and the companion in her missions, considers it impossible to narrate how many hatreds she extinguished; how many conversions she brought about. He relates having seen at times more than a thousand persons come to her in a single day. Many of them, at the mere sight of the heavenly light that shone in her face, felt themselves affected with the sacred fire of virtue. Others, before she spoke, would run repentant to the feet of a confessor. So great was the multitude of penitents that many Friars Preachers were not enough to hear the confessions of all. Such fruits of eternal life induced Pope Gregory XI to depute her to an unwonted apostleship by granting that she

should go among the Sienese and bring with her three friars, she to convert the sinners, and they to absolve them from their sins.

Blessed John Dominic, himself a holy and most eloquent preacher, at hearing in Pisa the sermons of Catherine, and at seeing the efficacy of her unapproachable eloquence, was filled with astonishment. The venerable Carthusians of Gorgona besought that the saint might preach to them, and her voice so powerfully moved and carried them away that they never ceased repeating that Catherine was a miracle of wisdom.

And what wonders of charity and zeal did she not exhibit in times of great public trial and distress?

In that land of Tuscany, ravaged by civil war and famine, broke out the plague, horrible, terrifying. This only gave a new opportunity to Catherine to renew the prodigy of her love. Oh, if you had seen her, sad and sorrowful, go about as an angel of light amid the obscure shadows of death, comforting with her aid and with her tears the unhappy dying ones! Never did a mother run with such tender affection at the agonizing cries of her children as did this loving virgin fly everywhere amid the horrors of the pestilence and the convulsions of the dying. Her charity and her prayers were a source of consolation to all, and they brought back to penance and rectitude of life many who had up to that forgotten their duty to God and to their immortal soul.

But time forbids me to go more into detail concerning the wondrous labors she underwent for the good of souls during this period of her life.

Let me hasten to tell of the great public acts of her life.

The New Peter the Hermit.

2. At this time Amurath, the terrible and perfidious sultan of the Turks, was on the point of flinging from his throne the weak Paleologos, who with much difficulty still preserved Constantinople to Greece, on the one hand; and on the other, having formed an alliance with the Tartars, he threatened to invade Hungary and thrust himself into the heart of Christendom and drown in blood the Church and the civilization of the West. A spirit of hatred and discord seems at this time to have pervaded throughout Europe, and almost all the Christian States were at war with one another.

Wherefore, Gregory XI and Catherine wisely devised to turn to the salvation of the Church and to the peace of Europe the warlike spirit of the people and the indomitable ambition of their kings.

It was then that she was seen with the magnanimous enthusiasm of a Peter the Hermit, and the inspired eloquence of a St. Bernard of Clairveaux, going from country to country enkindling a generous ardor in the breasts of warriors; writing letters to kings and princes, calling on them to undertake the holy enterprise; dispatching her followers, among whom were counted many of the greatest prelates and captains, to call upon the peoples to take up arms against the greatest enemy Christianity has had to battle with in the centuries of her existence. Alas! Through the discord and jealousy of the crusaders themselves, as well as through the treachery of false friends, the enterprise, like those of former centuries, ended in disappointment and failure.

Catherine, the Ambassadress.

3. A new and more arduous combat was reserved

for the holy Dominican heroine. That fourteenth century in which our saint lived was one of the most turbulent in the history of the Church. The inhabitants of Rome, as many a time before, had risen in revolt against the Sovereign Pontiff and driven him into exile to Avignon, where he got shelter and protection from the king of France. All Italy was torn and convulsed with civil wars.

In Rome itself, the center of the Christian world, the demagogue, Cola di Rienzi, carried away the deluded people, and dreamed of setting up once more a commonwealth modeled on the republic of pagan times. The arrogance of the princes and the fury of the people tyrannized in the name of liberty. As a result majestic churches and monuments the most venerable in Christendom went to ruin. Such was the decay brought about in the city of the popes that the grass grew on the very streets, while bands of soldiers of fortune, at one time in the pay of this or that petty tyrant; at another, licensed to live by sack and robbery, defiled the streets with slaughter and heaps of ruins.

As might be expected, Catherine labored without repose to bring about peace between Father and children. Elected ambassadress of the republic of Florence, then at war with the Sovereign Pontiff, she flies to Avignon and presents herself before the Vicar of Jesus Christ.

What a scene is here presented to us! Under the gilded vaults of the great consistorial hall, Gregory XI, in pontifical garb, is seated majestically on a magnificent throne. The cardinals, vested in their ample scarlet robes, surround him as a crown.

Solemn is the aspect of that venerable senate, when the humble sister, with modest look and recollected

mien, is admitted to the august assembly. All eyes are turned on the pious messenger in her white tunic and black mantle. All gaze with a holy respect on those cheeks pale with penance, that brow on which shines the light of inspiration, and that virginal face which reflects all the holiness of a soul pure as the light, tender as love, ardent as the lamp which John saw before the throne of God. At a sign from the Pontiff, Catherine lifts for an instant her eyes to heaven and begins to speak. Such was her eloquence, so great was the force of her reasoning, such the sacred fire that burned in her words that the venerable Pontiff, with a voice filled with emotion, exclaimed: "Woman, that you may see that I desire peace, I place everything in your hands." Ah, an humble sister chosen by the Church and by Italy to arbitrate concerning their destiny! A spectacle so sublime history never presented before or since.

The Triumph of Her Life.

This was only part of her triumph, and before leaving the court of Avignon she induced the Pope, in spite of all the artifices that hell and all the influence of an interested and crafty policy of king and prelates could raise against her, to return to the City of the Popes.

This opposition was carried so far that even at the end of prolonged contests Gregory's own father prostrated himself on the threshold of the papal palace to prevent the Sovereign Pontiff's return. But the Vicar of Jesus Christ, strengthened by the magnanimous example and by the lofty presence of Catherine, and repeating the words of David: "Thou shalt walk on the asp and the baselisk," passed over his prostrate form, and returned with his holy guide and counsellor to Rome.

It was a joyous day, that 17th of January, 1377, when Rome, after a widowhood of two and seventy years, received again within her walls the Supreme Pastor of Christendom; and we can well conceive the joy and festivity which the whole population exhibited at the entry of their Father and king. The papal flag is unfurled and imposingly given to the gale. Amid the sound of trumpets and strains of sacred music, with the whole population dancing for joy, with streets strewn with flowers and Arras tapestry, the Sovereign Pontiff advances, riding on a noble charger, and enters the Holy City. At his appearance all hands are waived, all hearts are moved. The air resounds with songs and cheers, mingled with the sound of musical instruments. In the midst of universal expressions of joy and gladness the Father of Christendom is conducted to his home.

It shows the humility of her who alone brought about this happy restoration of the Father to his children that Catherine did not enter Rome that day.

The Peacemaker.

5. Think not that here ends the mission of this lofty heroine of the Church. She who had reconducted the Pope to the Holy City in that land bathed in the blood of martyrs near the tombs of Saints Peter and Paul, after an absence of two and seventy years—a feat which the most influential and prudent statesmen of that age could not achieve! she, I say, without allowing herself a moment's repose after such gigantic labors, girds herself for new combats and victories.

The war between the Republic of Florence and the Church growing more bitter and obstinate than ever, Gregory places anew everything in the hands of Cath-

erine; and she, arbiter of peace and war, flies once again to Florence.

There all the hypocrisy and trickery of politicians is put to work to deceive and terrify the holy ambassador; but in vain. And when the mob, armed and furious, seeks to put her to death, she goes to meet them, serene and intrepid, and declaring that she is ready to shed her blood for the Church and her country, offers her neck to the dagger of the assassin. O woman! O heroine! What battles are not won when one fights with such magnanimous courage! And the heroine of the Church and the Papacy conquers; and towards the end of July, 1378, under Urban VI, peace is signed between the Church and Florence.

Nor is this all. But, alas, the narrow limits of a discourse forbids me to tell of the noble part she took in the sustaining of the true Pope, Urban VI, in that most trying crisis in the Church's history, the Great Schism of the West; of the sublime treatises she composed on the mystic and interior life; and of the reformation of manners brought about among clergy and people, a reformation which ended later on by triumphing over the hateful schism which alone from corruption of manners drew its origin and nourishment.

The End.

Not all yet. Like the heroes, this holy daughter of St. Dominic is not content if she does not yield up her life in her last battle.

With His death our Lord founded His Church and Redeemed the human race. Death, which is the most tender expression of fortitude and love, death in Jesus Christ, and for the salvation of the Church is the most

ardent desire with which is consumed this unconquerable heroine. Amid the languor of ecstacy she embraces the feet of her adorable Beloved and bathes them with burning tears, crying amid the most tender convulsions of love: "Grant, O Lord of my soul, that I may die for Thee. Furnace and abyss of charity, dissolve this light cloud of my body, that I may be with Thee."

And then, turning towards her weeping spiritual children who surround her, she looks upon them with ineffable sweetness and presses them one after another to her maternal heart. Then lifting her hand and blessing them for the last time, she fixes her eyes on high as if she beholds the gates of the Heavenly Sion, and calling out with Jesus on the cross: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," and pressing in her hand the palm of victory, she goes to receive in heaven her exceeding great reward.

APPENDIX I.

ST. PATRICK'S BIRTHPLACE—SEE PAGES 239-253.

"The famed Criomthan then swayed the Irish scepter,
And, dreaded for the fury of his arm,
His sovereignty extended over the seas.
Unmindful of the dangers of the waves
He, with insuperable force, subdued
The Scots, the Britons, and the warlike Gauls
Who paid him homage and confessed his sway."—*An old Irish poet, whose authority, Keating asserts, is unquestionable.*

Criomthan Mor (Creevan the Great) ruled Ireland from A. D. 366 to 379, as has been said above. "He gained victories," say the Irish Annals, "and extended his sway over Alba, Britain, and Gaul."

"The fact of part of Gaul's becoming tributary to Ireland," says O'Brennan in his *Antiquities*, p. 462, "encouraged the mutual commerce between the two countries." From the *Leabhar Gabhala*, the *Book of Conquests*, we learn that at a very early era there existed frequent correspondence between the Irish and the Gauls. The Irish monarchs had frequently intermarried into the ruling families of that country. Criomthan attempted the conquest of it. His sturdiest opponents were the indomitable Belgae who appeared on the top of the snowy cliffs of the *Morini* to repel him.

It is to this period of Irish power and conquest that Claudian, the Roman poet, refers when he says: "The Scot (*i. e.*, the Irishman) moved all Ierne against us, and the ocean foamed under his hostile oars." *"Totam quum Scotus Ierne movet, et infesto spumavit remige Tethys."*

"The Irish expeditions against both Gaul and Britain," says Dr. Douglas Hyde, "became more frequent towards the end of the fourth century", (Literary History of Ireland, page 23), and Mosheim, referring to the *Waldenses*, a people who lived near the Alps, distinguishes them from "the Waldenses" heretics, the followers of Peter Waldo, of Lyons, by saying they were *Irish people*. They got their name, Waldenses, *"Gaol Daoine"*, in as much as they were the descendants of the soldiers of the Irish King, Dathi (Dauhi), many of whom settled in those parts after their heroic leader was killed by lightning on the Alps, whither he had pursued the defeated Romans.

I am not unaware of the age-long controversy relative to the birthplace of the Apostle of the Irish. Some, as the Rev. Dr.

Todd, Trinity College, Dublin, Archbishop Healy, in his monumental Life of the Saint, and others, would have him born at Kilpatrick, near Dumbarton, in Scotland. Others, as Professor Bury, somewhere in the valley of the Severn. Others, as Lynch, of Dublin, at Tours, in Gaul. Others, in Glastonbury, England. Others, finally, near Bologna, in Northern Italy, or elsewhere.

Without pretending to any extensive or critical knowledge on the subject, let me here say that the view expressed in the passage given above (page 239) seems to fit in more harmoniously with the facts and circumstances of the time, and especially of the Saint's life, as well as with the universal tradition among the Irish themselves, than any of the others.

And, first, Patrick himself in his *Confession,* an undoubtedly authentic document, relates that he was made captive, "together with *many thousands of others",* which seems to predicate a state of war between his captors and the inhabitants of the country to which he belonged, rather than a piratical descent of lawless bands of raiders, as has been stated.

Secondly, he complains that they, the captives, were scattered among many nations—a statement which corresponds exactly with the social condition of the Irish at the time. They were made up of many septs, or clans, *gentes,* as would be described by a writer accustomed to Roman ways of thinking and speaking. The chiefs having returned home after a successful war, the captives were distributed among the septs who had taken part in the expedition.

Thirdly, he states that they were "at the ends of the earth", and "among strangers", which could not be if Patrick and his companions were Scotch people hailing from Dumbarton, on the coast facing Antrim, the land of his captivity. The Scotch and the Irish in those days were the same people, speaking the same language, observing the same customs, under the same Ard-ri, or Sovereign Paramount, the King of Ireland. It was only at the synod of *Druim Ceat,* more than a hundred years later, that the Scotch, under King Aidan, ceased to pay tribute to the Ard-ri, Aidh macAinmuirech, his kinsman, through the intervention of St. Columkille, of Iona, the kinsman of both.

Niall, the Irish King, got his title *"of the Nine Hostages",* on account of his having kept in bonds, as was usual at the time, four hostages from the chiefs of Alba, Britain, Gaul, and the Saxons, as well as five others from the provincial kings of Scotia, or Ireland, and both countries—that is, Ireland and Alba or Scotland—were in alliance against the common enemy of both, the Britons and Romans, whose territories they harried by grievous war.

Moreover, living as he was in the north of Antrim, he could not truthfully say that he was "at the *ends of the earth*", since the coast of Ireland is only twelve miles distant from the Mull of Cantire, the most westerly point of Scotland. Why, on any clear day, he could see the cliffs of his native Dumbarton only sixty miles away from the slopes of Slieve Mis, where he daily herded cattle for his master, Milcho. And granted that he belonged to the Gallo-Roman community and lived in the "Tabernae" or camp of the Romans, still would he be little more of a stranger among the Irish than among the Scotch, many of whom, we may suppose, came recently from Ireland; since there was then a far greater intimacy between the Scotch and the Irish than there was at any subsequent period of their history.

Again, St. Patrick, speaking of his escape from Ireland, says that "the ship that was to take him to his home lay at anchor two hundred miles away", that "it took him three days to make port", and "that from thence he made a twenty-seven days' journey to reach his home, having had to cross a great desert".

Now, why go to the extreme South or West of Ireland, two hundred miles away, to get a ship crossing to Scotland, when there were scores of them lying in all the roadsteads of Antrim, Down, and Louth, where we may suppose a continuous intercourse was kept up with their kinsmen on the opposite shores?

"He had a prosperous voyage," as we are told in the hymn of St. Fiech, an equally authentic contemporary document. Why did his ship take three days to make port, when, had he seized one of the swift *curraghs* that lay in every creek along the coast, he could himself alone scull his way to Cantire, twelve miles away, in as many hours? And from what part of England or Scotland would he have to cross a desert, and to take twenty-seven days to reach his home?

It will be said that the British Isles were very different then to what they are today.

Were they? And did the Romans, the great road builders of history, make no public ways in Great Britain during the four hundred years of their occupation of the country? And would he, a Roman, the son of a decurian, be travelling through a hostile country, when, as we may suppose, the way was studded with Roman camps? (*castra,* I would have you observe, not *tabernae,* or *taberniae,* a word which a writer accustomed to Scottish or English designations of places would never use.) He tells us in the same *Confession* that when he was an old man he "long wished to visit his relations, but the distance prevented him". This surely could not refer to England or Scotland.

Let us now take the supposition that Northern Italy was his

home. His ship could not reach any port in Italy from Ireland in three days, or ten days, under the most favorable auspices. Neither have we any data to show that raiders from Hibernia made a descent on any part of Italy in those times, so that the supposition seems indefensible. It is true that the Irish King, Dathi, led an expedition to the Alps, where he was killed; but, then, his enterprise was a real war, and we are to suppose that he had reached only the western border, facing Gaul.

It remains, then, that Gaul, and Gaul alone, was the natal place of the Apostle of the Irish. But what part of Gaul? Was it Tours, as is alleged by Lynch, and others? But this supposition came chiefly from an etymological error of one who did not understand the language, and who confounded the term *"Tur"* Neim Tur, of St. Fiech's hymn, with Tours. The first line of the hymn runs: "Genair Patruice nemh Thur."

In his *Confession* St. Patrick tells us that he was born in *Bonaven, Taberniae* or *Tabernae,* and that he went to his people in Britain. And again in his letter to the tyrant, Coroticus, that he desired to visit his people in Britain, and from thence pass on to his friends in Gaul.

To understand the terms, we must remember that there was a *Britannia Major* and a *Britannia Minor* in those days, just as there was a *Scotia Major* and a *Scotia Minor,* and that *Britannia Minor* took up a good part of Western Gaul, including Artois, Picardy, Normandy, Brittany, and corresponded largely with the country of Armorica (air muirse, the country bordering on the sea), or the whole western seaboard of modern France. It got its name, as great authorities, such as Keating, Bede, and others, would have it, from Britaon Maol, the Irish chieftain mentioned in the *Book of Invasions,* who, in early days, being defeated by the Fomorians, or African pirates, fled to Armorica, and his followers' descendants in after centuries crossed over the sea to the neighboring isle, colonized it, and gave it its name, Britain, or Britannia Major. Cormac MacCullinan, in his *Psalter,* written in the ninth century, and a work of great authority, says that the Welsh came from the same stock. The Welsh themselves admit it. (See Keating, Vol. I, page 58. O'Brennan's *Antiquities,* Vol. I, page 436.) Keating would have, moreover, the Belgae a colony of Firbolgs from Ireland. Venerable Bede, in his Eccl. Hist., Bk. I, Ch. I, says that the Continental Britons gave name to Great Britain. And Nennius, and Procopius, are of opinion that Britons lived in the north of Gaul at an early period.

Here it may be repeated that if the said Britain were in France how could Patrick pass on thence to his friends in Gaul? But

we must remember that in those days Britannia Minor, and Gallia Celtica, or the country of the Celtae, were different countries. Caesar, in his Commentaries, Bk. I, tells us that "the Marne and the Seine were the boundaries between the Gauls and the Belgae"; and, again, that "the Belgae were the bravest of the nations he had to contend with", making a clear distinction between them and the Kelts of the rest of Gaul.

"Bonaven," Bononia, means clearly in Keltic, the mouth of the river, or rivers, and "Tabernae", or "Taberniae" (not, be it remarked, *"Castrorum"*, as would be the term universally employed to designate the place, were it located in either England or Scotland), the Roman encampment of Bonaven, which afterwards grew into the town of Bologne-sur-mer. "Morinorum civitas", says Lempriere, is "Terouenne (Tarvenna) on the Sis", and according to him, and to Le Brue, in his *Atlas Universelle Geographie,* a Paris, 1822, the ruins of the city are there still. (See below, Note 1.)

St. Fiech, in his hymn, says that Patrick was born in "Nemh Thur", "Holy Tower", which designation he gives it, either out of reverence for the saint, or because it was so called, which is the more likely, as the Franks afterwards called the country *Neustria,* which is a modification of the Keltic words, Nemh Thur. Eustachius, a learned writer of the seventh century, Probus, a faithful historian of the same era, and, in later times, Baxter, Lanigan, Flemming, etc., all agree in the view that the Bonaven, Taberniae of the *Confession,* is the Bologne-Sur-mer of our own days.

"When a question is raised as to the identity of a certain town," says O'Brennan, "reason suggests that when facts, circumstances, and a generally accepted opinion are in favor of a given one, we are bound to arrive at a logical conclusion that such a town is that mentioned." But in the present case the three things are for Bononia (Celtice, Bonaven) Taberniae in the Morini. Therefore, it must have been the birthplace of St. Patrick.

"The river or rivers is or are there. The taberniae or castra were there. The ruins of Terouanne, according to Lempriere and Le Brue are there, and a general, nay, an almost universal opinion on the point exists." (Antiquities, p. 440.)

As to Bononia in Northern Italy's being considered the birthplace of our Saint, this arose out of a wrong conception of the learned Colgan, when he translated *Leatha, Letavia,* in the hymn, and elsewhere, to be *Latium,* when in reality it is the Keltic for Litoris, the maritime region of Gaul (Armorica). Under the same false conception he designates the *clpa h-uilc* of the hymn *the Alps,* which is to do violence to the text, which evidently

refers to mountains in Ireland. He was further led to take up this opinion from the history of St. Seanchall (Secundinus), Patrick's companion, who was said to be a Langobard, and to be a native of *Leatha.* Now, we know that the Lombards did not enter Italy till the end of the sixth century, at which time St. Seanchall was long dead. History testifies that before entering Italy they passed some time in Neustria, after they came from their original home in the North of Germany.

The fifth stanza of the hymn runs as follows:

"Do faid elpa h-uile
De mhuir; boh-amhra reatha;
Conid (az) farzzaibh la German,
And aēr(n) deircuirt Letha."

("He proceeded over all the mountains
To the sea; prosperous was his flight;
He dwelt at (by) the seas with Germain;
Afterwards in the southern part of Letha [Letavia].")

Let me here remark that Bury gives an entirely false translation to the first verse of the stanza, *do faid elpa h-uile:* (the angel) "sent him *across all Britain,*" and he gives no reason whatever for his selecting the region of the lower Severn as the birthplace of the saint. As leading up to this conclusion he takes, furthermore, the reference in the *Confession* to the voices of the children from the Fuclut wood, as an evident proof that this locality was the place of the Saint's captivity—an entirely groundless inference.

In the *Liber Hymnorum,* a very early Irish work, probably of the sixth century, according to Ussher, Todd, Petrie, etc., we read: "Now Patrick in his origin was of the Britons of Ercluade (h-ercluaidhe), Calpurnius was the name of his father. The cause of Patrick's coming to Erin, this is the way it happened, viz.: The seven sons of Sechtmaidhe, king of Britain, who were in banishment, ravaged *Armorica Leatha.* They happened to come upon a party of Britons of Ercluade on that occasion, in *Armorica Leatha.* Calpurnius, son of Fotad, Patrick's father, was killed there, and Patrick and his two sisters were taken captive there," etc.

The story of Patrick's captivity is told in almost identical words in the Leabhar Breac (Lhowar Brack), a book of the early fifteenth century, at Seachnall's hymn, "Patrick's Captivity". "They (the Irish invaders) happened to come on a party of Britons of Ercluade. A party of the Britons met them at that time in *Armorica Leatha.* They killed Potitus'

son, Calpurn, Patrick's father, and they captured Patrick and his two sisters."

The scholiast of St. Fiech's hymn says: "They (the invaders) plundered *in Leatha,* a district in Armorica," and the author of the Tripartite Life says that Patrick was captured there.

Lanigan quotes from Keating, who says: "I have read in an ancient manuscript, whose authority I cannot dispute, that St. Patrick and his two sisters were brought captive into Ireland *from Armorica, or Britain, in the kingdom of France.*" Probus, also, according to O'Brennan, is most clear on the subject, "when he (St. Patrick) was yet in *his own country* with his father, Calpurnius, and his mother, Concessa, also his brother Rutchi, and his sister by name Mila, *in a town of Armorica,* a great commotion arose in those places."

And again, Probus, "which town of Bononia we undoubtedly find to be *Neustria,* where rumor had placed the giants of old". I have not taken notice of the other places claimed as St. Patrick's birthplace, because space forbids, and I consider their claims altogether untenable and preposterous.

To sum up, then, we can suppose the Irish warriors returning from their expedition to fall upon a party of Britons and Romans; kill the deacon, Calpurn, Patrick's father; take prisoners of war the boy Succat and his two sisters, together with many thousands of others of the conquered Gauls and Romans. These were then brought to Hibernia, distributed among the *Tuatha,* nations, or Septs, whose members took part in the expedition.

Ireland was for them truly "the ends of the earth", even as Patrick's own country of the Morini had long been designated as such by Roman writers, as we learn from Virgil, and others. See Aeneid Lib. VIII.

In order to reach the point of his departure on his escape he had to cross all the mountains ("elpa h-uile"), Slieve Mis Benna Borche, or the Morne range, Slieve Na Erin, in the Queen's county, the Galtees, etc., in order to reach "Bennen", perhaps Bantry Bay (Ben tragh), in Cork, or some other southern port, where, in those days, there were always to be found French or Gallic ships lying at anchor. From there he took voyage in a trading vessel for, say, Brest, on the French litoral, which they reach after a prosperous voyage of three days.

As the country was disturbed, nay, turned into a desert (see note 2), as well from the incursions of the Irish invaders as from

the devastating raids of the Huns, the Franks, and the Vandals, he travelled, for fear of recapture, by circuitous paths, which took him twenty-seven days, to his own people of Nem Tur, Bonaven, Taberniae, now the French port of Bologne-sur-mer.

Note 1—According to Lempriere, there were three cities in these parts that bore this name, viz.: Tabernae Rhenanae—Rhin Zabern, on the Rhine; Tabernae Riguae, Bern Castle, on the Moselle; Tabernae Tribocesorum, now Saverne in Alsace, not to speak of the Tabernae of the *Confession.*

Note 2—Should the reader question the above statement, namely, that the country through which Patrick would have to pass to get to his home "was turned into a desert", let him hear what Cardinal Newman says of the same Gallic litoral, writing of the year A. D. 407, just four years before Patrick's escape:

"Hosts of barbarians came down upon the civilized world, the Roman empire. One multitude—though multitude is a feeble word to describe them—invaded France, which was living in peace and prosperity under the shadow of Rome. They desolated town and country. Seventeen provinces *were made a desert.* Eight metropolitan cities were set on fire and destroyed. Multitudes of Christians perished, even in the churches." And he refers the reader to Gibbon, Hist., Vol. V, ch. 30. See Newman, Discussions and Arguments, page 83.

APPENDIX II.

IRELAND A NATION OF APOSTLES.

"They (the Irish) were in great part the founders of the monastic system in Western Europe." See page 264. This statement is confirmed by a historian above suspicion, namely, M. Henri Martin, who, in his *History of France* (Vol. II, page 130), says: "In a few years the disciples of Columbanus wrought fundamental changes both in the men and in the soil of the northern provinces, and to them is really due the honor commonly awarded to the Benedictines, who have only reaped the fruit of their labors. . . . The entire seventh century belongs, in a moral aspect, to the students of Ireland." So, also, Scaliger le Jeune, the French critic, who says that in Charlemagne's day almost all the learned men of Europe were Irishmen, and Alice Stopford Green, in her learned work, *Irish Nationality,* says: "Probably in the seventh and eighth centuries

no one in Western Europe spoke Greek who was not Irish or taught by an Irishman" (page 54). St. Bernard testifies that Ireland poured out swarms of saints, like an inundation upon foreign countries.

The pre-eminence of the Irish missionaries in intellectual and missionary achievement in the centuries following the conversion of Ireland to the faith is now admitted by all historians. There are to be found, however, English writers of the present day, who, if they are unable to snatch from them the glory of success, would, nevertheless, try to make the Anglo-Saxon church enter on the proud heritage of the fame attached to their labors. Thus, the writer of the article Anglo-Saxon in the Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. I, page 510, Section 6, has this to say: "The preaching of the Irish monks, of whom St. Columbanus was the most celebrated, in Central and Western Europe, was followed and *eclipsed* by the efforts of the Anglo-Saxons, in particular by those of the Northumbrian, St. Willibrord, and the West Saxon Winfrith, better known as St. Boniface."

And, later on, Section 7 of the same article, when treating of Anglo-Saxon literature and art, he continues: "Aldhelm, Bede, and Alcuin, represented the high water mark of Latin scholarship in the Christian West of that day." And he further continues: "With this high standard the arts introduced from Rome, especially by St. Wilfred and St. Benedict Biscop, seem to have kept pace.". And he goes on to expatiate on the graceful designs of ornamentation on the stone crosses of Northumbria belonging to this period, and the famous Lindesfarne Gospels, etc.

Now, in respect to all this, let me say, in the first place, that St. Willibrord can scarcely be said to be an Anglo-Saxon missionary at all. True, he belonged to the Anglo-Saxon race, but he got his monastic education in the monastery of Rathmelsigi, in the County Mayo, Ireland, where, according to Alcuin, he spent twelve years. When Pepin, King of France, wrote to his abbot, St. Egbert, asking the help of Irish missionaries to evangelize the Frisians, he was chosen to be the head of the band selected, nearly all of whom were Irish, and trained in the same Irish monastery.

As to St. Boniface, though his admirers in later times gave him the title of "Apostle of Germany", it is a misnomer. For, unlike Ireland and Scotland, there was not one, but there were hundreds of apostles of Germany. The Irish missionaries had already labored in that not inhospitable field for a hundred and fifty years and had frequently watered it with their blood. "When

the Anglo-Saxon, Winfrid, surnamed Boniface," says Zimmer, "appeared in the kingdom of the Frisians as papal legate, in 723, to Romanize the existing church of the time, not one of the German tribes (Franks, Thuringians, Alemmanians), or the Bavarians, could be considered as pagans. What Irish missionaries and their foreign pupils had implanted for more than a century quite independent of Rome, Winfrid organized and established under Roman authority, partly by force of arms." (The Irish Element in Mediaeval Culture, p. 35.) And so of others. "Every English missionary from the seventh to the ninth century," says Alice Stopford Green, "had been trained under Irish teachers, or had been for years in Ireland enveloped by the ardor of their fiery enthusiasm; when this powerful influence was set aside English mission work died down for a thousand years." (Irish Nationality, p. 55.)

As to Aldhelm, Bede, and Alcuin, "the representatives of the high water mark of Latin scholarship in the Christian West of that day", the writer forgets to state that the last-named scholar got his education in Ireland, and the first in an Irish monastery in England, facts which neither of those great men were unmindful of.

When Alcuin was at the court of Charlemagne he frequently sent reverential letters, accompanied with gifts from himself and the emperor, to his old master, St. "Colcu the Wise", in Clonmacnois, by the Shannon. With respect to Aldhelm, he had the good fortune of studying under the famous Irish teacher, Maildubh, the founder of the monastery of Malmesbury, and from whom the town itself gets its name. Even Jarrow by the Tyne, where Bede spent his life, was in good part under the spell of the Irish seats of learning in the neighborhood.

And as to the high standard attained in the arts in Northumbria, it was all the work of the Irish monks of Lindesfarne, Whitby, Melrose, etc.; though, it may be, carried on in after times partly by Anglo-Saxon hands, as is attested to by Miss Margaret Stokes, and others; and the works of art cited are purely Celtic, as anyone who takes the trouble to look at the examples given can see.

The fact is, the Anglo-Saxons, instead of taking a leading part in the conversion of the peoples of Northern Europe, were themselves wobblers in the faith for many decides after their evangelization by Roman and Irish missionaries. On the death of King Ethelred, in 616, Kent, with the neighboring kingdom of Essex, apostatized for a time, until Christianity was restored by St. Lawrence, and others. On the marriage of King Edwin

of Northumbria to a Christian princess from Kent, St. Paulinus accompanied her as her chaplain. The saint labored hard among the uncouth Angles of the north, and, in time, gained over the king and numbers of his subjects, to Christianity. But on the death of Edwin, which took place in a great battle fought against Penda, the pagan king of Mercia, 633, the Northumbrians again returned to the worship of Thor and Woden, and Paulinus fled the kingdom, to which, it seems, he never afterwards returned, and the work of their conversion had to be done over again by St. Aidan and the Irish monks of Iona. As to the people of the great kingdom of Mercia, or the Midlands, they clung for many long years to the worship of their idols, till at last, on the fatal field of Winwaed, by Leeds, their king, Penda, was slain; and "the winning of central England", says the historian, Green, "was a victory for Irish Christianity, as well as for Oswiu".

As to the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy, they also owe their conversion in great part to the Irish missionaries. Malmesbury and "Glastonbury of the Irish" were centers of light to the South and West Saxons, while the great Irish monastery of St. David's in Wales sent its contingents of ardent missionaries to evangelize the western regions. "Their missionaries," says Alice Stopford Green, "wandered on foot over Middle England and along the eastern coast, and even touched the channel in Sussex. In 662, that is, sixty-five years after the landing of St. Augustine in Kent, there was only one bishop in the whole of England who was not of Irish consecration, and this bishop, Agilberct of Wessex, was a Frenchman who had been trained for years in Ireland." (P. 47.) And, to sum up, in the words of the learned historian, W. P. Joyce: "It is now admitted that England owes its conversion to Irish missionaries—partly from Iona, and partly from the mother country—more than to Augustine and the Roman monks." (Soc. Hist. of Ir., Vol. I, p. 337.) An unprejudiced witness to the same fact is the distinguished Anglican bishop of Durham, Dr. Lightfoot, who says: "Of the eight kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxon confederation, that of Kent alone was exclusively won and retained by the Roman monks." And, again, he says: "To Aidan is to be attributed the first place in the evangelization of our race. Augustine was the apostle of Kent, but Aidan was the apostle of England." (Lightfoot, p. 11.)

We know that English writers often affect to believe that in ancient times England, as well as Ireland, was styled: "the Island of Saints." This designation has crept into the works of modern continental writers, and was heard even from the lips of a Pope in recent years. Cardinal Newman shows the aptitude of

the designation in this unique fashion, the only possible way in which it could be shown: "In ancient times Ireland was styled, 'the Isle of Saints.'" In 1171 Ireland became subject to England. Therefore, England also can be styled "The Island of Saints." "This," says Cardinal Moran, "is the most illogical sentence Newman ever wrote." *Quod tuum est meum et quod meum meum est.*

As to the northern nations of Europe, Scotland and England included, the fact is, that to the Irish, and to the Irish almost alone, must be attributed the work of their conversion. This a short list of the chief Irish monasteries abroad, as well as the testimonies of unprejudiced historians, will show.

Thus, we have in Great Britain, Iona, with its three hundred dependent monasteries: Lindesfarne, Whitby, Melrose, Glastonbury of the Irish, St. David's, Padstow of Argyl, etc., Glenfinane, Don, St. Hilda, Kilrimont, Inchelen, Knobbersburg, Bosham, Malmesbury, etc.

From the great monastery of Lismore, according to St. Bernard, sprang a hundred Irish monasteries, many of them abroad. In Burgundy the children of St. Columbanus founded Annegray, Luxeuil, Lure, Beze, St. Ursanne, St. Roman, Moutier, Remiremont. In Lombardy and Switzerland, the famous monasteries of Bobbio and St. Gall. In France and Belgium, Fontinelle, Joumieges, Jouarre, Rebais, Leuconnais, St. Bertin. By other Irish missionaries: Meaux, Brabant, Salzburg, Mechlin, Altmünster, Peronne, Lagny, Fosses, Sackingen-on-Rhine, Maintz, Cologne, and a hundred others; St. Luane of Bangor was, according to St. Bernard, the founder of a hundred monasteries, not to speak of the monasteries founded by the daughters of St. Brigid, the Mary of Ireland, whose spiritual children, even in the lifetime of the saint, are said to have numbered 60,000, and who peopled Great Britain and the continent with colonies of Irish virgins.

A great Bavarian prelate of the West, when preaching to a mixed congregation of German and Irish Catholics, took occasion to exhort them to mutual love and respect, irrespective of nationality.

"The Bavarians," said he, "should especially bear in mind that they were indebted to the Irish for their Catholicity, the forefathers of the present Irish people having brought the glad tidings of the Gospel to Germany long centuries ago."

In a German work called "Bavaria Sancta", this good bishop gives the history of the introduction of Christianity into his native country.

The book gives the names of the Irish saints of Bavaria as follows: Eustasius, Agilus, Marinus, Anianas, Magnus, Colum-

banus, Ehrhardus, Alto, Virgilus, Marinus the younger, Theclanus, Fiadolinus, Kilian, Colman, Totuan, Disibod, Giswold, Clemens, Salust, Amor, Murcherel, as some call him, Murichero-dachus, Vimius, Zimius and Martinus.

And, in all, not to speak of England and Scotland, no less than three hundred Irish saints are venerated in those countries, Irish saints, I say, who spent their lives, and many of whom shed their blood for the propagation of the faith throughout Europe.

As a confirmation of what I say I here insert some passages from a remarkable book—*The Irish Element in Mediaeval Culture,* by Professor H. Zimmer, of the University of Berlin, translated by Jane Loring Edmonds, Putmans & Co., 1891. "Ireland can indeed lay claim to a great past. She can not only boast of having been the *birthplace* and abode of high culture in the fifth and sixth centuries, at a time when the Roman Empire was being undermined by the alliances and inroads of German tribes, which threatened to sink the whole Continent into barbarism—but, also, of having made strenuous efforts in the seventh, and up to the tenth century, to spread her learning among the German and Romance peoples, *thus forming the actual foundation of our present Continental civilization."* Pp. 3-4.

"Ireland was especially conspicuous in introducing it (Graeco-Roman Culture) anew in the form of Christian principles into France; these efforts being made there when civilization was at its lowest ebb, and the country in its most degraded condition." P. 11.

Speaking of the Irish, he says: "These unsubdued Keltic tribes were reserved for a great purpose—to inaugurate the evangelization of Central Europe. Following the Nomadic instincts of their race, they were destined to be pioneers in the missionary history of Europe, and while the Teutonic tribes were as yet in a state of semi-barbarism." P. 13.

"Near the end of the seventh century, and at the beginning of the eighth century, a long series of missionary establishments extended from the mouths of the Meuse and Rhine to the Rhone and Alps, while many other foundations by Germans are the offspring of Irish monks." Pp. 29-30.

"Alcuin mentions the fact that in olden times the most learned instructors of Britain, Gaul, and Upper Italy, were from Ireland." Pp. 30-31.

"According to the testimony of the abbot, Jonas, of Bobbio, contemporary of Columbanus, and his biographer, about six hundred and twenty missionaries went from Leuxeuil, the head quarters of Columbanus' missionary work, into Bavaria." P. 31.

"But more striking than all the individual instances is the

indisputable fact that the Irish were destined to become the instructors of the Germans, Franks, Alemanni, in every known department of knowledge of that time." P. 43.

"As in the early part of the seventh century the Merovingian kings welcomed the Irish apostles who spread Christianity and the first elements of culture among the German tribes; so, now, in the ninth century, in schools and monasteries all over France, the Carlovingian kings employed Irish monks as teachers of writing, and tutors in grammar, logic, rhetoric, astronomy and arithmetic." P. 45.

"Ireland's mission on the Continent was completed in the eleventh century. But Irish monks continued to wander through the Rhine valley for a hundred years afterwards." P. 85.

The following Irish monasteries were founded in the twelfth century: Warzburg, 1134; Nuremberg, 1140; Constance, 1142; St. George, Vienna, 1155; Eichstadt, 1183; St. Mary, Vienna, 1200.

In 1078 Muiredach Mac Robertaig, better known to fame as Marianus Scotus, founded the monastery of St. James, in Ratisbon. This monastery was closed only in 1860. An old chronicle says: "Now be it known that neither before nor since was there a more noble monastery; such magnificent towers, walls, pillars, and roofs, so rapidly erected, so perfectly finished, as in this monastery, because of the wealth and money sent by the king and princes of Ireland." Well, indeed, could this old shanachy grow fervent in praise of this noble pile of architecture; for, as we see it today, as a work of art of purely Keltic design, it can compare favorably with the best architectural works of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. "The Irish monks who, from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, quitted the north of Ireland to make pilgrimages to this part of Germany, were worthy successors of those apostles and scholars we find in France from the seventh to the tenth centuries—full of zeal, piety, sobriety, and a genuine love of learning." P. 97. And to finish, let me quote from a truly notable work:

"They (the Irish monks) were instructors in every known branch of science and learning, possessors and bearers of a higher culture than was at that period to be found anywhere on the Continent, and can surely claim to have been the pioneers—to have laid the corner-stone of western culture on the Continent, the rich results of which Germany shares and enjoys today, in common with all other civilized nations." (Dummler's article on Alcuin, in the General German Biography, p. 130.)

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